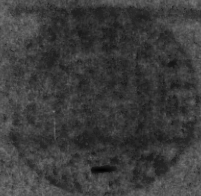


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THE  
CHURCH OF ST. SIFFRID.

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CHURCH OF ST. BERNARD

THE

THE

CHURCH OF ST. BERNARD



THE  
CHURCH OF ST. SIFFRID.  
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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Non mesto, non valor, non riverenza:  
Nè d'età nè di grado, nè di legge;  
Non peno di vergogna; non rispetto  
Nè d'amor nè di sangue; non memoria  
Di ricevuto ben, nè finalmente  
Cosa sì venerabile, o sì santa,  
O sì giusto esser può, ch'a quella vasta  
Cupidigia d'honori, a quella ingorda  
Fama d'aver, violabil sia.

GUARINI.

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VOL. I.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON,  
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1797.



THE

# CHURCH OF ST. SIFRID.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Non trovo, non valor, non riverenza  
Né d'or né di grado, né di legge;  
Non paro di vergogna; non rispetto  
Né di sanza né di sangue; non mercede  
Di ricambio non, né finalmente  
Cosa si vendesse o si facesse.  
O si piaga esser può, che a costui vada  
Cupidigia d'onore, a questa ricorda  
Tanta d'aver, viciosa il fin.

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THE  
CHURCH OF ST. SIFFRID.

C H A P. I.

The Norman race, the sons of mighty Rollo,  
Who, rushing in a tempest from the North,  
Great nurse of generous freemen, bravely won  
With their own swords their seats, and still possess  
them.

THOMSON.

**SIBILLA** was anxiously waiting the return of the servant from the post-office, in expectation of receiving an answer to a letter, when Mr. Harwood entered the breakfast-room with an open one in his hand.

VOL. I.

B

"Here



“Here is an invitation from your father, Sibilla,” said he, throwing it on the table, and endeavouring to look grave. Mrs. Harwood glanced her eyes over the writing, and, bursting into a laugh, “What can my father possibly mean?” cried she. “To bring all the servants in their best liveries! and to be at the Castle exactly at eight o’clock on Thursday morning!”

“Some new way of keeping up ancient Welch hospitality, I suppose,” said Harwood, laughing too. “You know your father never does any thing in which his mansion or his name is not concerned; perhaps he intends we shall be present at a meeting of the bards, or perhaps he expects the accomplishment of Talieffin’s prophecy; or, for any thing I know, he may have proclaimed a tournament in honour of Ethelreda’s beauty!—But I shall take  
a ride



a ride on the hills, this charming morning; will you come, Sibilla?"

Without waiting for an answer, Harwood, catching up his hat, walked towards the stables, followed by his lady.

The character of Sir Roger L'Esterling, so ludicrously sketched by Mr. Harwood, was by no means caricatured; but it will be necessary, in order to justify in some degree its eccentricity, and the veneration in which he held his descent, to mention the long line of his ancestors, and to give some description of his splendid and venerable habitation, erected, as he often boasted, some centuries before the Christian æra, and confessedly the most ancient in the principality.

St. Siffred's Castle, one of those bestowed by William the Conqueror on his followers, fell to the lot of Reginald L'Esterling, a Norman knight; the forefather, in a direct line, of the present possessor. It was situated close to the

sea, and surrounded by walls of incredible strength. The entrance to the castle was defended by a ditch and draw-bridge, which gave admission to a spacious out-court. Beyond presented itself a gateway under two towers, whose ponderous gate and port-cullis still seemed to preclude a nearer approach. Through this court appeared another, overgrown with grass, and surrounded by the apartments of the Castle: the grand hall; the splendid rooms adorned with crimson grown black from age, with fringes of antique manufacture; galleries, in which bats and owls had long obtained a footing; narrow towers and stone belfries, whose mouldering outsidcs gave decided proof of their high antiquity.

Behind these gloomy apartments, the delight and pride of their owner, lay the gardens of the Castle. These consisted of seven or eight, of a large size, one  
below



below the other ; each terminated by a grass terrace which communicated to the next by a flight of stone steps ; the lowest of which was defended from the sea by a kind of wharf, against which the waves dashed at high tides with astonishing noise and fury. Tall elms, yews, and twisted thorns, with a few old but ragged myrtles, and some apple trees, were all that flourished in the Castle gardens ; which, blown by the wind, and continually wetted by the spray of the sea, were quite bare on that side ; bowing their old and almost leafless heads towards the Castle, whose battlements and turrets appeared proudly to overlook them, and defy the ravages of age and the fury of the storm.

On the south side of the Castle, in a deep vale, lay the Church of St. Siffrid, which had once been a cathedral ; and the ruins of a cloister half obscured by trees. Here the L'Esterlings were de-



posited from father to son in uninterrupted succession; except one, who died on his return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Above the church the ground rose suddenly, covered with trees, many of which, though quite dead and leafless, still erected their dry branches to be felled by time alone. This wood almost skirted a large deer park, in one part of which a lofty watch-tower added much to the beauty of the surrounding scenery.

In this domain, in the undoubted antiquity of his name, and, above all, in being born a Welchman, Sir Roger placed all his happiness; and knew no sublunary joy, no terrestrial glory, equal to maintaining the character of hospitality, so justly the right of his nation.

A fortune of ten thousand pounds a-year was not more than equal to the expence of almost maintaining half the county; consequently Sir Roger was sometimes

sometimes more than ready for his rents. But these slight inconveniences were forgotten when the gentry were seated at the upper end of the hall, raised by a step above the vassals; when the *canto* was praised vociferously from every mouth, and the harpers from the gallery at the lower end sung to their instruments lively romances of the middle ages, in their native tongue.

But even in these moments of supreme felicity, Sir Roger sometimes felt the insufficiency of human happiness. When he surveyed his hall, his banners, his vassals, his minstrels, the noble arms of L'Esterling emblazoned on his windows; he lamented with bitterness, that with the world in general they had lost their consequence; and that to hold a plenary court, or to proclaim a tournament, was utterly impossible.

Till he married Miss L'Esterling, Mr. Harwood resided chiefly in London.

The family seat had passed from the hands of its original possessor into those of an old uncle, whose penurious disposition had at length enabled him to purchase it of his nephew, whose circumstances forbade his living in it. The money arising from the sale was appropriated to pay the electioneering debts of the elder Mr. Harwood, who had quitted this world bitterly regretting his impaired estate and alienated mansion. With five hundred pounds a-year, all the remains of a noble fortune, Charles Harwood had his residence to choose; Living in Wales perfectly suited his disposition; he enjoyed the beauty of the country; and firmly resolving the example of his more opulent neighbours should never lead him into expences, with the acquiescence of his wife he fixed on a small but comfortable house in a solitary and beautiful situation. Here he sometimes amused himself with strolling  
ing



ing on the banks of a romantic river, or in the thick shade listened to the murmuring of its cascades; sometimes, less indolently inclined, he ascended the almost perpendicular hills that rose behind his house, from whence might be discerned the sea, and blue mountains scarcely distinguishable from the sky itself.

In this solitude Mr. Harwood and his wife never repined at the scantiness of their society; since their two boys, the eldest two years old, were to them the most engaging companions.



## C H A P. II.

*Quem tumulum Nili, quem Tybridis abluat unda,  
Quæritur, et ducibus tantum de funere pugna est.*

LUCAN. *Pharf. lib. 6.*

ON the morning appointed by Sir Roger, Mr. and Mrs. Harwood left Kilgaren in a new post-chaise which had been lately added to their domestic establishment, accompanied by their servants on horseback, according to the letter of the Baronet's invitation. As they had twenty miles to go before eight, the carriage had been ordered at five. When descending the hill, they met a postilion from the Castle, with an additional pair of horses. Not much surprised (for that the Baronet was impatient was nothing new), they made no enquiries of the man, who, they soon perceived by the extraordinary manner in which he drove,

drove, had received positive orders not to loiter on the road.

At the time appointed, or rather before, the chaise drove into the outer court. The porters, in new liveries, invited them to join their master, who waited to conduct them into the Castle. With smiles he could scarcely contain, Sir Roger welcomed his visitors. "You are very late, Harwood; I expected you at eight, and now I imagine it cannot be far from eleven?"

"Eleven, sir!" cried Harwood with astonishment.

"Yes;" said Sir Roger, "but I may be mistaken; we proceeded entirely by guess, the morning was too cloudy to allow us to see the hour by the sun-dial in the court; clocks and watches, you know, I never trust—an idle invention! So that, after waiting, as I thought, till nine, I grew impatient, and ordered the ceremony to be performed. But come

into the breakfast-room, let me introduce you to the bride and bridegroom."

"A tenant's wedding, I suppose!" said Harwood to his wife, as they followed Sir Roger into the room; where from the upper end came forward to meet them a tall and rather elegant-looking young man, and Ethelreda L'Esteling. Mrs. Harwood, dumb with astonishment, embraced her sister, introduced to her by Sir Roger, as Mrs. Carloville. The same ceremony repeated with her new brother, Mrs. Harwood was invited to take her place at the breakfast table, at which the bride presided. The silence that at first prevailed was embarrassing to the whole party; but particularly so to Mr. Carloville, who saw the grave faces of his relations, and could not but guess the surprise and perhaps the dislike his appearance, and sudden connection with them, their opinion not consulted, might occasion.

"I am



"I am sorry, sir," said Ethelreda, who had made the same observation in her own mind; "I am quite vexed you did not think proper to let my sister know your intentions with respect to me, some time since; I should at least have had the satisfaction of her presence earlier this morning."

"And I should not have had the satisfaction of enjoying her surprise," cried Sir Roger. "But I had almost forgotten to tell you one thing, Harwood; a circumstance it is that gives me more real pleasure than any thing that has occurred since your marriage. You know it has always been my wish, that the whole family of the L'Esterlings should be married, christened, and buried, in St. Siffred's church. This has literally been the case with all but that pious and unfortunate knight Sir Ralph, who died and was buried in the city of Famagusta, on his return from the Holy Land."

"I la-



“ I lament it sincerely, sir,” said Harwood, whilst Sir Roger paused with tears in his eyes.

“ But my dear son Carlovile,” continued he, “ has promised that he himself will take the journey, on purpose to bring back the bones of my pious ancestor ; and indeed I am the more sanguine in this undertaking, as I know there is amongst the archives of the Castle, though, to say the truth, I have never seen it, a small manuscript describing the very spot. It was brought to Sir Edward, the son of the deceased, by a pilgrim who was present at the funeral.”

“ Really, Sir Roger,” cried Carlovile gaily, “ these are additional circumstances in favour of the probability of succeeding”—Harwood stopped him, by a grave stare of surprise, from proceeding.

“ I was once,” said Sir Roger, pursuing the subject, “ cheated by an Italian  
who

who came to take views : he heard me lament the absence of my predecessor from the family-vault, and, enquiring where he was buried, pretended to have seen his tomb : the manuscript was therefore an unnecessary appendage to the journey he undertook to perform for five hundred pounds. I console myself, however, with the idea of still possessing the manuscript."

"Why, my dear sir?" said Ethelreda. "I do not perceive what loss the manuscript could possibly have been; for I do not imagine Mr. Carloville will be able to understand, or even read, a single syllable of it!"

"That, Ethelreda, is an objection I have long foreseen; and having made the more obsolete part of the language my principal study, I will immediately set about translating this invaluable manuscript, for which the learned pilgrim, we have it upon record in our family, would

would only accept a silver crucifix which belonged to the deceased knight. If I remember right, he was descended by the mother's side from the great Glendourwys; his father, Rice ap Fowa, was very highly descended too, and a man of known military skill, as the Edwards found to their cost; Howel ap Rice, the pilgrim, wrote the most correct Welch of his time; his father's armorial bearings were a bend argent on a field gules; the son added three bezants or, in commemoration of their services against the infidels."

Neither of Sir Roger's sons was herald or genealogist, and of course totally disqualified for joining in the discourse; and though Harwood knew very well, it was only to mention Byzantium to bring on the origin of all the armorial bearings in Christendom, he was not sufficiently in temper to enter on Sir Roger's favourite topic, and provoke a discussion that would most probably  
have



have lasted till the evening-bell of the Castle tolled for prayers.

Sir Roger was silent a few moments ; then rising from his chair with a sigh, he invited his sons to accompany him into the park, leaving Ethelreda and Sibilla in possession of the breakfast-room.

" You are surprised at my marriage, my dear Sibilla ?" said Mrs. Carville, looking at her sister.

" I am indeed, Ethelreda. But I am still more surprised that you should not have written to me on the subject : you used to think five years' difference in our age entitled me to give advice on subjects of infinitely less importance."

" Nor have I changed my opinion, my dear sister ; but I was absolutely forbidden to write to you ; and you know how well my father expects and deserves to be obeyed."

" You cannot have known Mr. Carville

loville long, Ethelreda ! It is scarcely three months since we left the Castle ; I do not recollect even hearing his name then."

" I have known him but three weeks," said Ethelreda.

" And you are married to him !"

" Dear Sibilla, what could I possibly do to avoid it ? One would really conclude you did not know my father ! Mr. Carloville was very well introduced ; he is the son of Lord Carloville of Ireland, and heir to a large estate. In one week, I believe, he proposed himself to my father, who, I would venture to say, his family out of the question, had never listened to him but in hopes of getting Sir Ralph's bones from Famagusta. — I remonstrated with my father," continued Ethelreda, " and pleaded my extreme youth ; he would hear nothing against the marriage. ' You are seventeen, Ethelreda ; my father married the Lady Onoria Albizi, at fourteen,

fourteen, when he was in Florence."—  
There was nothing to object to such an argument, you know," continued she gaily. "Besides, it appears to me that Carlovile and I shall agree tolerably well; I will come and live near you and Harwood, where there is no great probability of meeting with any one who can rival him, either in person or manner.—But, to speak the truth, I have a little recovered my temper; I was vexed at not being allowed to wait some time longer, and make my own election."

"I have too good an opinion of your principles, Ethelreda," replied Mrs. Harwood gravely, "to have any fears for your future deportment: follow your mother's admirable example, and you will not fail to be happy; that is, you will have no cause to reproach yourself."

The marriage of Ethelreda had been celebrated at the Castle with all possible splendour.



splendour. For more than a fortnight nothing was heard but the sounds of reveling. The dance, the song, the music of the harp, had promoted festivity in the great hall, where all the tenants and nearly all the county had drunk the health of the new-married pair, and a long life to Sir Roger, till they could scarcely stand. The whole neighbourhood had visited and felicitated Mr. and Mrs. Carlovile; Sir Roger himself, forgetting plenary courts, and the far-distant bones of Sir Ralph, declared he was truly happy.

Mrs. Harwood, who thought every moment an age that she was separated from her children, had proposed to her husband to return. Mr. Harwood, who wished to know something more of his brother-in-law than he could learn from Sir Roger, in the mean time, at all convenient opportunities, had been making enquiries in the neighbourhood, which  
however

however he forbore to communicate to any one.

Mr. Carloville had been on recruiting service at the next town, and was introduced at St. Siffrid's by Lord Caerleon; who having unfortunately left the country for his winter residence (it was now October), Harwood could gain no information with respect to his character, that was either decisive or satisfactory. In this situation were affairs at the Castle, when Harwood, in compliance with his wife's request and his own inclination, informed Sir Roger L'Esterling of his intended return to Kilgaren. This proposal was so strenuously opposed by him, at least for some days, that Harwood reluctantly gave up the point, and agreed to hunt the next morning with some gentlemen of the neighbourhood.

Sir Roger, who, though in the fifty-third year of his age, was still attached to all the sports of his youth, determined

at

at all events to be of the party, and was soon the first after the hounds. Harwood, perceiving his horse was too powerful, followed at full speed; but before he could overtake him, or even come within hearing, the horse stumbled, fell, and rose again, leaving his unfortunate master dead upon the ground. The distressed Harwood saw Sir Roger's fall; but, thinking he was only stunned, he sent a servant to unhinge a gate; and placing him upon it, supported by the dismounted party, he dispatched another for the nearest surgeon, whilst he himself rode forward to the Castle, from which they were not very distant.

But the horse had already preceded him to the Castle; and the sad catastrophe of Sir Roger's death was without any preparation made known to his daughters. When Harwood arrived, he found them in a state of distraction and agony difficult to describe or alleviate; but yet  
not



not without hopes, which he unfortunately confirmed; so that when the body arrived, and the surgeon that attended it declared the certainty of his death, the lamentations and sorrows of the servants, who affectionately loved their master, were joined with those of his daughters as if they had each lost a father; and they were too much occupied with grief to afford the ladies any assistance, who, fainting and almost dying, had scarcely begun to feel the extent of their misfortune, or be sensible of their loss.

It was however necessary that Mr. L'Esterling, the heir of the title and estate, should be immediately made acquainted with his uncle's death, that he might be present at the interment; a mournful task that of course devolved on Mr. Harwood.

The body, according to the family custom, was embalmed; and had lain in state in the great hall, which was hung with

with black and all the quarters of the L'Esterling arms, for two days. On the evening of the third, the melancholy party, whom no sound had disturbed but the evening bell of the Castle, was roused from a profound silence by the rattling of wheels in the outer court. In a few minutes the door of the drawing-room opened; and the voice of a gentleman giving orders to his valet in French prepared them for the entrance of Mr. L'Esterling, now Sir Francis.

The ladies, from their father's description, for they had seen him but seldom, who held his nephew in the highest contempt, were prejudiced against his person and manners. With hair quite flaxen, a pale complexion, the most ridiculous foppishness of dress and manners, and of diminutive size, Sir Francis was not calculated to remove their prejudices, or conciliate their esteem.

“ I have the honour of addressing myself

self to my cousins, I presume?" said Sir Francis, profoundly bowing to each. They only curtsied. "May I not take the liberty of requesting to be introduced to these gentlemen," turning towards Mr. Harwood; "my relations, I imagine?"

"My name, sir, is Harwood, and that lady," pointing to Mrs. Harwood, "is my wife. Mr. Carlovile, Sir Francis—who has been married three weeks to Miss Ethelreda L'Esterling; a circumstance of which I presume you are already informed."

"I was very seldom informed of any thing that occurred at the Castle," cried Sir Francis, gaping; "but my cousin Ethelreda married!" addressing himself to Mrs. Carlovile; "I am really sorry—"

"I am really extremely obliged to you, sir," said Carlovile with sharpness, breaking a silence he had main-



tained for some hours; "and so I do not doubt is my wife!"

"You are not angry with *me*, I hope, sir?"—said Ethelreda, rather piqued at his tone of voice.

"You cannot be at a loss for the answer to your question, madam,"—he replied in the same tone, and leaving the room as he spoke.

Sir Francis followed Carloville with eyes that expressed his astonishment; then turning them towards Ethelreda with curiosity, seemed to ask the reason of this quarrel: no one however was disposed to give him any information; and the doleful silence would have lasted for ever, but for the entrance of a servant who came to announce the supper. Sir Francis, seizing the opportunity of an escort, for which he had long been waiting, hastily withdrew; after bidding the ladies good night, declaring

he

he could no longer support the fatigue he felt from this journey, which was more intolerable than crossing the Pyrenees or Apennines.

In the passage waited La Jeunesse for his master, but not alone; for the servants had taken pains to terrify him with stories of apparitions, whilst he inwardly determined and impatiently waited an opportunity of repeating them to Sir Francis, to whom he knew nothing would prove so powerful an incentive towards his speedy departure, as the most distant expectation of visitors from the other world.

The chamber into which the new baronet was shewn was not badly calculated to assist the designs of La Jeunesse—a room almost as large as the aisle of a church, hung with tapestry so dark that scarcely was the design discernible; a bed of the most antique form, over which was suspended at a great height,

from the fretted ceiling, a canopy sustaining long curtains of what once was crimson trimmed with gilt leather; and, to complete the scene, several full-length portraits were hung where the tapestry had deserted its station, amongst which were two admirable likenesses of the late Sir Roger and his lady.

On his first entrance Sir Francis started back: "How is this, La Jeunesse? Whither are they shewing us?" cried he with looks of horror——He turned to speak to his conductor, but he was out of hearing.

"Mon Dieu! Je ne sçais!" replied La Jeunesse with despair in his countenance. "On m'a assuré cependant, qu'on alloit vous préparer la meilleure appartement du Chateau."

"It cannot possibly be this, then! Ring the bell, La Jeunesse."

Here La Jeunesse informed his dismayed master, that there were no bells in the



the Castle, as the servants had previously warned him. "On m'a dit aussi qu'il y ait partout des reveneurs; c'est ici l'appartement du feu Chevalier," continued La Jeunesse.

"My uncle's room!" cried Sir Francis with increased fright. "Then we have one wing of the Castle entirely to ourselves! Let us find our way back."

Here La Jeunesse remonstrated, declaring it was an utter impossibility; and fearful of wandering all night amongst long galleries, where bats flitted over his head as he passed through them, and from whence he distinctly heard the hooting of owls, he endeavoured to persuade his master to remain where he was, rather than run so great a hazard.

At length the Baronet recollected there were windows; and in hopes of finding one that looked into the court, where he was certain of being able to alarm some

of the servants, he approached one, and opening with some difficulty the casement, perceived with additional disappointment that the windows looked towards the beach; the brightness of the moon, and the hollow murmuring of the sea, which dashed at intervals upon the pebbly shore, appearing to make his situation still more desolate.

“Not for twenty thousand a-year,” said he, “would I have slept in this dreary place, if there had been a possibility of avoiding it!”

La Jeunesse rejoiced in the welcome intelligence; and after endeavouring to console his unfortunate master, and having placed several lamps with which he was provided according to his master's custom, he prepared to take possession of his own apartment, which, less magnificently furnished, was hardly in so good repair; and the terrified va-  
let

let heard on all sides the scampering of rats in the flooring, the screaming of owls, and chirping of crickets in the chimney.



## C H A P. III.

Report of fashions in proud Italy,  
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation  
Limps after, in base awkward imitation.  
Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity  
(So it be new, there's no respect how vile)  
That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?

RICHARD II.

SIR Francis L'Esterling's sole aim was singularity; which in some measure he contrived to procure himself by constantly making it a rule to maintain some very extraordinary opinion, which he supported with great force of argument and strength of reasoning upon all occasions and in all companies. Sometimes he would put on all the air and accent of a foreigner, and interlard his strange discourse with French sentences and

and scraps of Italian ; and at others, assuming all the gravity of a Turk, he would declare there was no existing without opium, which he pretended to chew in large quantities. He was *nervous* ; he believed in ghosts ; he was decidedly a disciple of Mesmer or of Mainaudue ; in short, he was passionately fond of foreigners : and whatsoever absurdities they broached, either in their writings or in their conversations, of which he was extravagantly fond, they were sure of a warm advocate in Sir Francis L'Esterling ; who, if his rhetoric was not the most convincing, did not fail to exert it vigorously upon such occasions, at the same time placing the most implicit confidence in the strength of it. Sir Francis was fond of music, hated perfumes, could draw patterns, collected fossils, affected study, but was particularly fond of dancing. In short, he laboured to become an epitome of incongruity

gruity and whims ; he would sometimes be pleasant and amusing, in order to contrast more strongly his disagreeable fits, which were upon the whole the most frequent.

Yet notwithstanding, there was, in his opinion, something so attractive and elegant in the person and manners of Lord Caerleon, the brother of Lady Mariamne Conway, to whom he had been some time paying his addresses, that, in spite of his extreme wish to be reckoned a very peculiar, odd sort of man, he sometimes caught himself in the very act of studiously copying his dress, his air, his manners, and even the tone of his voice. It was this extreme deference for Lord Caerleon, that first induced Sir Francis L'Esterling to pay his addresses to Lady Mariamne, who was the *ton*, and with whom he had very little chance of succeeding, when the death of his uncle put him in possession of ten thousand a-year.

CHAP.



## C H A P. IV.

Que m'importe après tout, que son ame hardie  
 De mon parjure amant flatte la perfidie ;  
 Ou qu'exerçant sur lui son dédaigneux pouvoir,  
 Elle fait mes tourmens sans même le vouloir ?  
 Qu'elle chérisse ou non le bien qu'elle m'enleve ?  
 Je le perds, il suffit : sa fierté s'en élève ;  
 Ma honte fait sa gloire ; elle a dans mes douleurs  
 Le plaisir insultant de jouir de mes pleurs.

VOLTAIRE.

**M**R. Harwood's repeated enquiries in the neighbourhood had at length been successful, but most unsatisfactory.

Mr. Carlovile, he was told, was the eldest son of Baron Carlovile. But, from a series of bad habits, and particularly having lost great sums at play, to restrain him from which his father's remonstrances had no effect, Lord Carlovile had determined to act so as effectually

tually to punish and mortify his son, by peremptorily refusing to see him or remit him money. This most distressing information Mr. Harwood had carefully concealed from his wife, whilst he revolved in his mind what could be done for the unfortunate Ethelreda.

Carloville's regiment was ordered to the West Indies; a circumstance carefully concealed by him, but which was well known to Harwood; who, having fixed his departure, was solicitous to know how the Carlovilles intended disposing of themselves; but no intimation had escaped either of them, that could relieve the uneasiness he felt at the future prospects his affection presaged for the lovely Ethelreda.

On the day of her marriage, Ethelreda had been presented by her father with half her mother's jewels and five hundred pounds. The same sum, with the other half of the jewels, according to  
the

the request of her dying mother, had been given to Mrs. Harwood. Ethelreda, generous and disinterested, immediately gave the money to her husband : who asked for the jewels also : these she steadily refused to part with ; and after some altercation on his part, he sullenly left her to ruminate upon his conduct.

But Carlovile's selfish request dwelt not long on the young mind of Ethelreda, nor did his anxiety to procure the jewels make any impression to his disadvantage. With a noble estate, she knew her father was often at a loss for his rents : she therefore heartily forgave Carlovile for being in want of money, because she thought it sometimes happened to all ; and had they not been her mother's, whose memory she revered, the diamonds had been given without a question.

Heavily and slowly passed two more days at the Castle : on the third, the one appointed



appointed for the funeral, Sir Francis again returned to be present at it; for he had taken up his residence at an inn in the mean time, resolutely determined never to pass another night in the seat of his ancestors.

Previous to his departure, a will had been searched for in every part of the Castle where there was the smallest probability of finding one, but ineffectually. All hopes, therefore, of the very great fortunes expected by the Miss L'Esterlings at their father's death, were now at an end; it appeared that Sir Roger's expensive mode of living had sometimes more than exhausted his annual income; and the vast sums he had expended in keeping the roofs and walls of his dwelling in constant repair, had broken in imperceptibly on the fortunes of his daughters. Mr. Harwood, who had married from affection, yet felt some disappointment at the discovery, which  
however

however he carefully concealed from her, who on his account felt double mortification.

Carloville too, who had taken no pains to hide from his wife his anger at the firmness with which she refused the jewels, was not less solicitous than his brother-in-law, to conceal from all the excess of rage and bitterness he inwardly felt at having married an heiress who was portionless.

The interment having taken place with great pomp by torch-light; and Mr. Harwood having previously taken leave of Sir Francis L'Esterling, who, still preserving his antipathy to lodging in the Castle, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, was departed; Mrs. Carloville, overcome with grief for the premature death of her father, whose memory, not resenting his extravagance, she tenderly loved, had retired to bed; where

where the heaviness of her sorrow soon threw her into a profound sleep.

But Carloville, who hesitated at nothing, had previously taken an unfeeling and cruel resolution, which he studiously concealed from his wife and her relations.

Addicted to every species of dissipation, Mr. Carloville had long been abandoned by his family, in order, if possible, by retrenching his income to reform his unbounded extravagance and unprincipled libertinism. This mode of proceeding on the part of Lord Carloville, had been the means of breaking off a match between Lady Mariamne Conway and his son; Lord Treastle having taken the most effectual method of putting an end to the connection, by assuring Mr. Carloville he would never give him his daughter or her fortune, whilst under the displeasure of his family. Lady Mariamne did not acquiesce very peaceably



peaceably in this arrangement, and would immediately have married Mr. Carloville privately. This however he artfully evaded; a wife without a fortune was by no means adapted to his circumstances or inclination. He therefore departed on a shooting-party into Wales with Lord Caerleon, assuring Lady Mariamne of his unalterable attachment and inviolable constancy; when the sight of Ethelreda, and the hospitality that reigned in the Castle, induced him to attack the Baronet on his weak side, which he easily discovered, and finally to marry Ethelreda L'Esterling.

The same motives that incited him to marry, provoked him to abandon his wife, whose charming temper, cultivated understanding, and fascinating manners had no power to attach, or reform a disposition habitually selfish and inured to vice. Yet irreligious, immoral, and profligate as he was, Carloville could  
conceal

conceal these deformities of his mind under the disguise of gaiety. His person was handsome, his air fashionable ; and when no disappointment crossed his temper, and no selfish motive excited his resentment, his manners were prepossessing and agreeable.

It is not therefore very surprising that to a young woman such as Lady Mari-  
anne these were sufficient recommenda-  
tions, while his vices, though equally  
well known, were excused or overlook-  
ed as so common to young men of  
fashion ; and which, though rather too  
flagrant to find many partisans even  
amongst the most dissipated, were en-  
tirely pardoned by her, whose blind par-  
tiality, subduing her natural haughtiness,  
made her receive the news of his mar-  
riage with all the violence of rage and  
grief. Unused to contradiction, she felt  
with bitterness the disappointment aris-  
ing from what she termed her father's  
cruelty ;

cruelty; but confiding in Carlovill's vows of eternal fidelity, she looked forward with confidence to reconciling Lord Treastle to the match; whose extreme indulgence had seldom held out against tears and entreaties. When therefore Lady Mariamne found all her expectations and hopes frustrated by Carlovill's desertion, and union with Ethelreda L'Esterling, she determined to accept Sir Francis, now the richest of her lovers; enjoying with a malignant satisfaction Carlovill's disappointment in the fortune of his wife; and inwardly consoling herself with the idea of Ethelreda's misfortunes, whom she detested for having superseded her in Carlovill's affections, whilst she ardently waited for an opportunity of avenging the affront upon him with all the asperity and bitterness of irony, of which she knew herself so capable.

## CHAP.



## C H A P. V.

La fraude adroite et subtile  
 Seme de fleurs son chemin,  
 Mais sur ses pas vient enfin  
 Le repentir inutile.

ESTHER DE RACINE.

THE inhabitants of the Castle were retired to rest, and within the walls the profound stillness was broken only by the loud chirping cricket and dismal hooting of the solitary owl. The whistling of the wind amongst the turrets; and the flow and sullen murmurs of the ebbing tide, alone disturbed the silence of a dismal night.

Spent with watching (for, from their affection, they had all determined not to leave the corpse till after the interment, which had just taken place), the  
 servants

servants had stretched themselves upon the kitchen hearth, where the dying glow of some wood embers "taught light to counterfeit a gloom." The weary and superstitious porter, deserting his tower over the gateway, had left the key in the massy gate, which was standing open: no longer subject to the vigilant eye of Sir Roger, he had joined the drowsy group in the great kitchen.

Through these Carloville nimbly passed, without risque of disturbing them, to the court; the gate, the only impediment he feared, which however he had provided himself with the means to overcome, was to his great relief unfastened. Of the draw-bridge he was perfectly secure, as the custom of raising it at night had been discontinued on account of the decayed state of some of its machinery.

The moon, dimly breaking through black stormy clouds, discovered to him,  
beyond

beyond the farther court, a chaise and his own servant waiting his arrival; he quickly jumped into it, followed by his valet, and was speedily out of the neighbourhood of St. Siffrid's.

The morning, cold and foggy, had not tempted Mrs. Carloville to rise before eight o'clock. Harwood and his wife had already discovered the departure of Carloville, and, firmly persuaded that Ethelreda accompanied him, they were recalling to their recollection every possible circumstance that could have occasioned a flight so precipitate and so secret; when Ethelreda walked slowly into the breakfast-room, enquiring, as she entered, for Mr. Carloville. The whole truth rushed instantly upon the mind of Harwood; Sibilla too, unable to speak to her deserted sister, burst into tears.

"Sibilla! Mr. Harwood! I entreat you to tell what has happened!" cried the trembling Ethelreda, sinking with  
appre-



apprehension. "Nothing, nothing!" cried Harwood, running hastily out of the room. Ethelreda attempted to follow him; but she was unable to proceed, and, leaning on the table, with difficulty supported herself from fainting. "Your unworthy husband, Ethelreda," said Harwood, hastily entering with rage in his countenance, "has deserted and abandoned you! Deceitful, hypocritical villain, I will pursue him to——" Ethelreda dropped upon the floor.

Harwood's rage was converted into terror: her sister sprung forward to prevent her fall. At length, opening her eyes, and bursting into tears, "Oh my father!" she cried, "you have left me for ever, and I have not a protection upon earth!"

"Unkind Ethelreda! You then forget you have a sister?" said the weeping Sibilla. Harwood too, in the most affectionate terms, entreated the forsaken Ethelreda

Ethelreda to make his house her asylum, and forget the wretch who had basely and deliberately abandoned her when she most required his protection.

Without waiting for an answer, Harwood supported her in his arms through the apartments of the Castle, and, placing her and his wife in a chaise, stepped in after them. Surrounded by the servants, who came to take leave of the daughters of their beloved master, the chaise could not proceed. The two sisters affectionately spoke to each. Ethelreda would have wished them happiness, but the words died upon her lips; then looking eagerly round the court as the chaise drove on, she burst into fresh tears, and, leaning her head upon her hands, indulged herself in all the bitterness of unavailing sorrow.

Three months spent in retirement at Kilgaren had a little abated the melancholy that preyed on the mind of Ethelreda;

red; and her natural vivacity was gradually returning in spite of the unwelcome reflections that continually recurred to her. Yet there was something in dependence so grating to the spirit of a L'Esterling, that not all the tenderness of her sister, nor the affectionate attentions of Harwood, could banish the humiliating idea. That she was an additional incumbrance to his circumscribed fortune, added bitterness to her grief: and seeking the most solitary spots on the banks of the river, she would indulge herself in romantic projects which were to raise her into affluence and independence; or, giving way to all the gloominess of despondence, she would spend whole days in unavailing tears, and in forming the wildest and most impracticable schemes to leave the Harwoods, and find out her husband, whose retreat she had not yet attempted to discover. Yet his memory was become painful to her; and



when she considered that to live with him would be the most insupportable punishment, to live with the Harwoods appeared peace and happiness, splendour and independence.

In this painful and uneasy state was the wavering mind of Ethelreda: one moment harassed by the pride of her family spirit, which urged her to quit them; the next, congratulating herself on the tranquillity she enjoyed, she would determine never to leave them; when Mr. Harwood received a summons to take possession of his uncle's fortune, who died leaving him heir to three thousand a-year and a large sum of money.

The joy that reigned at Kilgaren at this unexpected and almost unwished-for acquisition had communicated itself to the heart of Ethelreda. Harwood was departed for Westmoreland, to make the necessary arrangements for the reception of his family at the seat of his ancestors.

His departure however gave her a sensible uneasiness: she knew his intention of quitting Wales; and the idea of removing from her native mountains was almost as distressing as had been that of leaving the still fondly remembered St. Siffred's.

Mr. Harwood's was a short absence: he returned at the end of a fortnight, and eagerly enquiring for the health of his children,—“I have something to propose, my dear Sibilla,” said he, “that I am certain both you and Ethelreda will approve. In London I accidentally met Sir Francis L'Esterling, and could not avoid asking some questions about the Castle; he intends to let it, and I have half agreed to take it: for I find upon visiting Harwood-hall, that my uncle lived in one room of it, and has suffered all the rest to want repairs so much, that it will take a long time to render it habitable. Sir Francis is on

the point of marrying," continued Harwood; "and, what is still more extraordinary, he purposed to visit Wales next summer, accompanied by his lady."

Mrs. Harwood acquiesced, with pleasure in her eyes. Ethelreda, agitated by a thousand tumultuous emotions, silently retired to her own room, whilst Harwood issued orders towards a speedy departure.

Ethelreda in returning to the Castle fancied she should feel her misfortunes with still more poignancy. But she was mistaken. Young, and with naturally good spirits, she had considerably conquered her melancholy. Her vivacity, and that taste for amusement and occupation by turns, the constant attendants on vigorous intellects, imperceptibly returned. At Kilgaren, the keenness of her feelings, and that restless indolence that always accompanies extreme sorrow, had destroyed the  
ardent



ardent desire of improvement and the thirst after information, once the marked outlines of Ethelreda's character. Company was irksome, yet solitude was as severe a burthen; wandering all day on the tops of the hills, or on the banks of the river, she would return weary and dispirited: again the morning broke, she rose unrefreshed by sleep, and tormented with the recollection of a thousand uneasy dreams. Occupation would alone have contributed to her relief; but of this she could not persuade herself: her spirits were sunk and depressed by the most corroding reflections; and prospects that brightened not, as she looked forward, continually presented themselves to her desponding and terrified imagination.

But at St. Siffrid's, a thousand objects directed her thoughts from herself. Some poor pensioners whom her misfortunes had obliged her to abandon, first presented

sented themselves to recollection. Though Mr. Harwood had in the most pressing manner entreated her to accept a very handsome sum, which would at once have given her the independence she so lately sighed for, Ethelreda firmly refused it; lest by some fatality the knowledge of it should tempt the selfish and interested Carloville to return and claim her as his wife. She therefore received from Harwood an annual sum, which, infinitely more than adequate to her personal wants, she chiefly distributed amongst the poor of the neighbourhood.

In this benevolent exercise, the tender and charitable heart of Ethelreda found its chief consolation; and, her thoughts diverted from dwelling perpetually on her own sorrows, she again sought occupation. This was mostly afforded her from the Castle library, which, though valuable, contained but few modern books.

books. Sometimes her harp relieved and at the same time indulged the pensiveness of her spirits; and sometimes, in all the glowing truth of colouring, she would copy with her pencil the picturesque scenes that surrounded the Castle. In these employments passed not unpleasantly the first two months of Ethelreda's residence there.

It was early in the spring; the few visitors that were seen at the Castle she no longer carefully shunned, but looked forward to the arrival of more neighbours with cheerfulness and satisfaction. Sibilla saw with infinite delight this almost unexpected change, and, encouraging her sister's returning relish for company, neglected no opportunities of improving it.

Notwithstanding his silence on the subject, Mr. Harwood by private enquiries had gained some information concerning Carloville. That he had dis-



posed of his commission and had left England, was however all that his utmost diligence could procure him. And as he saw from day to day, the remembrance of his cruelty had ceased to torment the mind of Ethelreda, he firmly resolved never to mention his name, at the same time wishing most fervently he had never existed.

It was now the spring; the snow had melted, and the sun shone in the clouds. The birds were singing, and the flowers were beginning to show themselves. The air was fresh and pleasant, and the people were beginning to stir. The king was sitting on his throne, and the queen was sitting beside him. They were both looking at each other, and the king was smiling. The queen was also smiling, and she was looking at the king with a look of love and affection. The king was looking at the queen with a look of pride and satisfaction. They were both looking at each other, and the king was smiling. The queen was also smiling, and she was looking at the king with a look of love and affection. The king was looking at the queen with a look of pride and satisfaction.

Nowwithstanding his silence on the subject, Mr. Harwood by private enquiry had gained some information concerning Carverton. That he had been

## CHAP. VI.

"I do not think a braver gentleman,  
 More active, valiant, or more valued young,  
 More daring, or more bold, is now alive,  
 To grace this latter age with noble deeds.

HENRY IV.

"**I** HAVE been arranging a charming party for you this morning," said Harwood, throwing down his hat upon a tambour, and oversetting Ethelreda's easel with his foot, as he entered the breakfast-room.

"Dear Charles!" cried Mrs. Harwood, "You have deranged a very useful one;" looking at the prostrate easel: "You must have something to propose vastly agreeable, to make up for all this?"

"Well well, forgive my awkwardness, and let me tell you my plan: I have

made an acquaintance in a cave, which I find is called St. Siffrid's," continued he; "we were both so charmed with the romantic beauty of the scene, that we agreed to meet there and dine. To-morrow the tide will serve exactly."

"But I do not yet comprehend how this arrangement is to extend to us?" said Ethelreda gaily. "This is apparently a tête-à-tête party, which I think you had better have kept a secret, as you have done the name of your new friend."

"It is Mr. Conway!" cried Harwood laughing at the impatience which had made him forget it; "he proposed bringing his mother and his cousins, and I have promised for your appearance, Ethelreda, and Sibilla's."

"I like your plan prodigiously, and I forgive the mischief you have done in telling it," said Ethelreda, picking up the damaged easel. "I expect," continued



nued she, "to find a fresh subject for my pencil; and Sibilla, I suppose, expects to pass a very pleasant sea-sick day.—You know she dotes on marine expeditions!"

"Make yourself perfectly easy, my dear sister," said Mrs. Harwood. "I would not step into a boat on this wild and terrible coast for the universe!"

"And make yourself perfectly easy, my dear Sibilla!" said Mr. Harwood; "for I engage you shall walk to St. Siffrid's cave without wetting your shoes."

But I have broken in upon your employment, so come and walk with me by way of punishment." Then giving an arm to each, they set out to pay and return visits in the neighbourhood, but particularly to introduce themselves to the family at Strathener Castle, which had been some days arrived there to spend the summer.

The inconsiderable distance between

Strathener and St. Siffrid's, made Mrs. Harwood and her sister prefer the exercise of walking to that of a carriage; and their proximity makes it necessary to explain why the ceremony of introduction was yet to take place, since both families had been a sufficient number of centuries established in their respective habitations, to render them perfectly eligible acquaintance for each other. Lord Trecastle and his son had from time to time visited the Castle in the shooting season; of course they had been frequent visitors at St. Siffrid's: but the late Lady Trecastle having stipulated at her marriage that she should never reside in Wales but with her own consent, quitted this world without ever having seen the most beautiful spot in it. Her daughters, having imbibed the same prejudices, reluctantly accompanied their aunt Mrs. Conway, who with her son and husband had lately returned from

one

one of the Italian Courts, where Mr. Conway had resided many years as Envoy, and from whence he had been recalled, with expectations of some more important employ.

Henry Conway, though educated chiefly abroad, was yet a determined Englishman. His father, who saw perfection in no other character than that of a consummate politician, or an able negotiator, would willingly have directed his son's inclinations the same way: but Henry Conway had no turn for intrigue; with manners the most prepossessing, and a person that would have afforded no inconsiderable aid, joined to that greatest of advantages, a finished education, Henry Conway had chosen the sea for his profession. He was now therefore, in the two-and-twentieth year of his age, the first lieutenant of a frigate. Mr. Conway, though disappointed at not seeing his son displaying all his



his brilliant talents and qualifications in the diplomatic line, in which he conceived him capable of making so great a figure, still placed a very high value upon his son's services, and neglected no means of raising him in his profession by his interest, or of aggrandizing his own name and fortune.

Henry Conway was adored by his mother, who unremittingly tried to remedy the defects of his education: for it had many; since the system pursued by Mr. Conway, though shining, was far from perfect, and absolutely deficient in some points that Mrs. Conway reckoned amongst the most essential. But she had few opportunities of inculcating her lessons; yet, such as they were, she had the satisfaction of observing they were repaid with the strongest affection and gratitude, and for the time at least appeared to make some impression.

“I believe I did not tell you this  
morn-

morning," said Harwood, as they walked through the shrubbery, and were approaching the hall, "that lady Mari-  
anne Conway is married to Sir Francis  
L'Esterling !"

The ladies were about to express their surprise, and to rally him on his extreme carelessness, when they saw approaching quick to meet them, a young and very handsome man, who had just dismounted from his horse.

"It is Mr. Conway," said Harwood, precipitately advancing to meet him, and as precipitately introducing Mrs. Carloville and Mrs. Harwood. The stranger, politely and cordially shaking him by the hand, expressed much pleasure at meeting him accompanied by the ladies of his family. "I flatter myself," continued Conway, "you are going towards the Castle : my cousins and my mother are still at home, and will be delighted to see their new relations, whose intimate

mate acquaintance they anxiously coveted."—Conway, stepping forward, threw open the door of a library, where sat an elegant and graceful-looking woman about forty, and two very fashionable and very affected-looking younger ones.

After the ceremony of introduction was over, and the party to the cave had been sufficiently applauded and objected to, and discussed and settled; and invitations to Strathener and St. Siffrid's had been mutually exchanged, Mrs. Harwood and her sister rose to depart. Conway, snatching up his hat, entreated permission to accompany them, to the no small dissatisfaction of his cousin Lady Octavia, who by no means relished the very great pleasure with which he seemed to congratulate himself on his new acquaintance.

"I cannot say I am *wonderfully* struck either with the manners or appearance of Sir Francis's cousins," said Lady Mariamne



Marianne addressing her sister, "as Harry Conway appears to be!"—

"Dear! Lady Marianne, I cannot imagine to what you can object, in either; in my opinion Mrs. Carloville is one of the most *interesting* creatures I ever beheld, and Mrs. Harwood is very charming;" said Lady Octavia, who had previously studied the countenance of her aunt.

"I agree with you, Lady Octavia," said Mrs. Conway. "Mrs. Carloville appears to be perfectly well bred and well educated, and her person is absolutely faultless. But Lady Marianne is extremely *fastidious*," continued Mrs. Conway in a good-humoured but rather sarcastic tone—"You know, Octavia, she sometimes finds fault with Conway himself."

The well-known partiality of Lady Octavia, and her large fortune, had already

ready determined the Honourable Mr. Conway, her uncle, to promote with all his authority a match between her and his only son. He therefore eagerly accepted his brother Lord Trecastle's invitation to spend the summer at Strathener Castle with his family. Lady Marianne L'Esterling proposed being of the party; and Sir Francis, Lord Trecastle, Lord Caerleon and Mr. Conway, whom indispensable business detained in London, having promised speedily to join them at the Castle, the ladies departed, escorted by Henry Conway.

Mrs. Conway had carefully studied the disposition of her intended daughter, and saw but faint prospects of happiness for her son in such a connection: she saw too that Conway entered not with alacrity into his father's views, and that the undisguised partiality of Octavia distressed and disconcerted him. That she

was selfish, vain, ignorant, and even envious, the penetrating and sagacious Mrs. Conway had long observed. But too firmly persuaded that, after her husband's resolution was finally taken, there was no appeal, she carefully concealed from her son the numberless faults she continued to discover in the character of Octavia; bestowing indefatigable pains, and endeavouring with extreme anxiety, to correct and amend them.

Conway, not less clear-sighted and penetrating, had already made equal progress in discovering the imperfections of his cousin. That she was handsome he could not deny: but beauty warped by affectation and vanity was, in the eyes of Conway, not an object of delight, but of disgust; her attentions were not flattering, and her unreturned preference was become irksome to him. But Lady Octavia, into whose catalogue  
of



of female virtues reserve did not enter, resolutely shut her eyes from the conviction that stared her in the face, of Conway's indifference, or rather his dislike.

## C H A P. VII.

The southern wind  
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,  
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves  
Foretells a tempest and a blustering day.

SHAKESPEARE.

**H**ARWOOD, having taken upon himself to provide every thing for the reception of the ladies at the cave, was not to be discouraged by a lowering morning: they set out in carriages for the cave, which was not quite two miles from St. Siffred's Castle.

This extraordinary and romantic spot, except at low water, was perfectly inaccessible; the rock running out on each side into the sea, so as to preclude the approach by land; and the extreme danger of the coast as effectually forbade the

the assistance of boats. In rough weather, the waves rushing with violence into the cavern threw the spray to the summit, wetting a few ragged and leafless thorns, which, growing from the clefts in the rock and bending themselves towards the mouth of the cave, intermixed with the long glossy leaves of the polipodies and the samphire, considerably added to its wild picturesque beauty.

Here Mrs. Harwood and her party were soon joined by the company from Strathener, very unexpectedly reinforced by Lord Trecaſtle, Lord Caerleon, Mr. Conway, and Sir Francis L'Eſterling.

The company now ſeated themſelves at the table: all beſtowed praiſes on the beauty of the ſcene and the taſte of the entertainer; whiſt ſome harpers, placed amongſt the hollows of the cavern, at intervals interrupted the converſation.

Lord Caerleon repeatedly declared  
how



how much he enjoyed a dinner *al fresco*; Sir Francis protested it was more charming than Venice itself. Lady Mariamne, laying aside her usual forbidding haughtiness, was all condescension; and Lady Octavia, redoubling her sentimental airs, was more troublesome than ever to Conway, who alone seemed to feel anything like depression or lowness of spirits, amidst this scene of hilarity.

Harwood's spirits, considerably exhilarated by doing the honours of his table and observing the satisfaction of his guests, now suddenly recollecting how much Ethelreda could add to the entertainment, loudly called to her to sing, in which he was strenuously supported by all the gentlemen. Lord Caerleon positively insisted it should be Italian; Sir Francis, who, closely copying his model, had been paying the most florid compliments to the diverted Ethelreda, re-echoed, "Italian!" when she began  
the

the rondo of "Idol mio serena i rai." She had half finished this enchanting air in a style the most captivating and masterly, when a loud whisper of "She is intolerably out of time," from Lady Mariamne to her sister, so disconcerted her that she stopped instantly, utterly incapable of continuing. She blushed, and apologised by looking at the two ladies.

The gentlemen all entreated her to finish her song, except Harwood, who, provoked at Lady Mariamne's envy and want of manners, said, "No, no! excuse Mrs. Carloville: Lady Mariamne will do us the favour to sing."

"Lady Mariamne knows very little of music, I believe," said Lord Caerleon carelessly.

"For heaven's sake! say nothing on that subject, dear Harwood!" cried the almost tipsy Sir Francis; "Io per me ascoltarei sempre piu pazientemente parlare un bergamosco!" forgetting that

his

his astonished and exasperated lady sat at his elbow.

"Really, sir!" cried she almost bursting with rage, "I never had the pleasure of hearing you express yourself in this way before."

"Oh, Jupiter!" cried Sir Francis, with a laugh he could not contain, and in which he was joined by all the men; "your Ladyship understands Italian?"

The sarcastic tone and the laugh that accompanied his reply, did not diminish her ladyship's rage. On the contrary, the dispute was growing warm, but for the interference of Lord Treastle, who observed the tide was coming in, and the sky black with heavy clouds from the south. But Harwood vehemently objected against the breaking up of the party, declaring positively the tide could not incommode them for another hour. The men, who were all rather incapacitated



tated from forming any judgment of the truth of this assurance, very contentedly acquiesced, and would quietly have refeated themselves at the table, when a loud clap of thunder, followed by a violent shower of rain, obliged the whole party to retreat further into the recesses of the cave. Here the ladies passed near a quarter of an hour in the most alarming expectation of another clap of thunder, and impatiently waiting for the rain to abate, which however continued falling in torrents. The increased roaring of the sea added to their apprehensions, and began to give them a serious alarm that they should find some inconvenience in making good their retreat. The countenance of Ethelreda had given evident signs of terror; and Conway, who stood next her, perceived the agony she endured, as the broad flashes of lightning shone upon her pale face.

"I can stay here no longer!" she cried.

cried in a voice of despair, and, attempting to move forward, would have fallen on the ground, had not Conway, who followed, caught her in his arms.

"Let me support you," said he, putting his arm round her. She was unable to reply: they came to the mouth of the cave: the dim twilight scarcely showed them all the horrors of their situation, the sea raging furiously, and dashing its spray with violence over the farthest rock.

"In a few moments," cried the agonized Ethelreda, "and we must remain here for ever!" She would have returned to the party in the cave, but her feet were fixed to the earth. "Sibilla!" she faintly articulated, and sunk lifeless upon Conway's shoulder.

"I will save her!" cried he passionately, lifting her in his arms, and running towards the beach; "I will save her, or we will perish together!"—He

resolutely rushed into the water, which was still shallow, owing to the flatness of the beach, and, approaching the farther rock, made repeated efforts to pass it, when the waves retreated; which, returning almost instantaneously with redoubled force, would inevitably have overwhelmed him and his lovely burthen, when he saw rolling towards the rock a wave of tremendous size. The violence with which it came forward would have destroyed them both, had not Conway avoided its fury by sheltering himself behind a small projection in the rock. Then following with all his remaining strength the wave, which retreated proportionally to the rapidity with which it had advanced, with inexpressible joy he saw himself on the other side; and, wading through the shallow water, was soon out of danger from the advancing tide.

At some distance, and out of the reach  
of



of the sea, he placed Ethelreda on the grass. She still continued insensible.—

“She is dead!” cried he in an agony of despair. His mother rushed into his mind: he ran towards the sea: “I will return, and assist them to escape!”

It was impossible! The tide was almost at its height; the night was fearfully dark: but the intrepid and despairing Conway, impelled by the idea of his mother’s sufferings, and the extreme bitterness of his own, once more rushed fearlessly into the water. He was soon out of his depth; but being an expert swimmer, he endeavoured with all his strength once more to pass the rock: but the sea continued to roll in, blown by a strong southerly wind, with extreme violence; and the unfortunate Conway, dashed back repeatedly by its fury, felt that he should inevitably drown himself in the attempt; for to reach the cave was utterly impracticable.

In this moment of extreme danger, that natural love of life, which for an instant his ardent desire to save his parents had extinguished, again re-animated the almost breathless Conway: vigorously exerting his nearly exhausted strength, and assisted by the waves, he once more reached the shore, so spent with toil, and so disabled by bruises, that, unable to arrive at the spot where he had left Ethelreda, he threw himself on the grass, expecting to perish there, numbed with the coldness of his wet clothes and the violence of his bruises.

It was not till Ethelreda and Conway had escaped, that the remainder of the party perceived the extreme danger of their situation. Lady Mariamne and Lady Octavia had repeatedly declared they would not leave the cave till the rain was over; and whilst the gentlemen were arguing the matter with some violence, the sea approached so rapidly, that

that the foam of a tremendous wave wetted their feet as they stood in the farther part of the cavern.

A universal shriek of horror re-echoed through its hollows; all was confusion and terror; hysterics, faintings, and convulsions, contributed to the extreme misery of their hopeless situation. The men, whom danger had completely sobered, raved and were silent by turns; Harwood clasping the dying Sibilla in his arms, in speechless agony awaited their dissolution; when a strong light was seen glimmering through the inner recesses of the cave, and loud voices, almost drowned by the still louder roaring of the sea, were heard indistinctly through its chasms. Instantaneously the dismayed group approached towards the light with precipitation. With joy almost too powerful for their senses, they saw a steep, but accessible flight of natural steps, beyond which, not a boi-



terous and tempestuous sea, but the trunks of some tall trees presented themselves, faintly illuminated by the dimly rising moon. Here the carriages awaited them; having reached which, they now first perceived the absence of Ethelreda and Conway. Mrs. Conway wildly insisted upon returning to the cave; but Harwood, forcibly placing her in his coach with her nieces, ordered his servants to drive to St. Siffrid's.

Attended by servants with flambeaux, Harwood descended the craggy passage, concluding that Ethelreda, unable to follow quickly those who carried the lights, was bewildered in its turnings. To find Conway with her he naturally expected. But still continuing to descend without meeting the objects of his search, the terrified Harwood called aloud to Ethelreda. The name alone repeated through the cavern, chilled his whole soul; at length approaching nearer, he perceived

it

it was quite full of water; and the waves, beating furiously against its roof, seemed as if they would force themselves through the narrow aperture by which he had descended. That they had remained in the cave till the waves overwhelmed them, whilst all besides escaped, seemed so impossible, that Harwood reascended immediately; firmly expecting to meet them waiting his return, and that some strange chance had separated them from the rest of the company. And he was not mistaken; at a little distance, as he emerged from the cavern, slowly approached Ethelreda supporting Conway, pale, shivering, and streaming with wet; his forlorn figure strongly representing the ghost of the shipwrecked Ceyx, whilst the countenance of Ethelreda gave no imperfect idea of the despairing and terrified Halcyone.

Harwood judiciously forbore asking

E 5

them

them any questions; and lifting Ethelreda into a carriage, and then placing Conway by her side, whose stiffened joints and benumbed limbs refused to lend him any assistance, he dispatched them to the Castle, and, once more providing himself with a torch, set out in search of Mr. Conway, who had departed with some servants to look for his son. The weary and harassed Harwood had not however advanced far upon the beach, before he discovered the unhappy father sitting stupefied with grief upon a ridge of stones; where he was resolutely refusing to return with his servants; but waiting the ebbing of the tide, he prepared, as he said, to pay the last offices to his son's corpse, which he expected to find upon the beach.

With some difficulty he was made to comprehend his son was still alive, and actually on his way to St. Siffred's: whether at length he was persuaded to fol-

low



low with Harwood, who inwardly resolved never to be instrumental in making another party without the walls of his Castle as long as he existed, firmly believing, that nothing but the hand of Providence itself could have saved them from the melancholy fate that awaited them. But, in effect, the way had been previously discovered by the servants; who very wisely concluded their masters must know it because they did. But finding they staid much later than was prudent, and knowing that at high tides the cavern was full of water; they first went to the Castle to order the carriages, and then prepared to see whether any of their owners were alive to make use of them.

## C H A P. VIII.

Inutile ou plutôt funeste sympathie !  
 Trop parfaite union par le fort démentie !  
 Ah ! par quel soin cruel, le Ciel avoit-il joint  
 Deux cœurs que l'un pour l'autre il ne destinoit  
 point ?

MITHRIDATE DE RACINE.

**A**T the pressing entreaties of Mr. Harwood, the half-drowned party for some days took up its residence at the Castle. The ladies were all confined to their beds with colds : Ethelreda's, accompanied by fever, was the most alarming ; whilst Conway, equally incapacitated by bruised limbs and strained sinews, was obliged to recruit by the same expedient.

At the end of a week, the less disabled part of Harwood's visitors departed ; leaving Ethelreda, though still confined

fined to her room, slowly recovering; and Conway not yet able to walk down stairs. Mrs. Conway, being perfectly at ease with regard to his safety, returned to Strathener with her nieces, promising however not to let a day escape, in which she did not personally enquire after the health of the invalids.

At the end of a fortnight, Ethelreda and her preserver met. Her heart, full of the most lively and tender gratitude, could only express its thankfulness by tears: and Conway, passionately kissing her hand, protested he was too happy in having saved the life of the loveliest woman in the world!

Another week passed rapidly at St. Siffrid's; and Conway knew it was absolutely necessary he should take his departure. But Harwood opposed it with arguments so powerful and decisive, that, notwithstanding his father's frequent enquiries on the subject, and the



the very plain hints of Lady Octavia, who paid them many visits, Conway was easily silenced by his opponent, who would vehemently protest the air of St. Siffred's was so infinitely more salubrious than that of Strathener, not quite two miles removed from it, that it would be madness to return till his health was re-established. Sometimes Ethelreda would timidly support her brother's argument; and Mrs. Conway, whose maternal tenderness made her see nothing but reason and judgment in Harwood's vehemence, would aid them with all her little influence over her husband.

Another week was drawing towards its close, during which Conway, accompanied by Ethelreda, and sometimes by Mr. and Mrs. Harwood, took tolerably long walks in the park, the gardens, or on that terrible beach where

was a Beggar, who sold his wares. "Mu-

"Mugiando sopra 'l marvo le gregge bianco"

ARIOSTO.

brought to the still terrified Ethelreda's recollection all the horrors of her late escape. And in hearing it circumstantially related, she found more occasion for her gratitude, than words to express it.

But notwithstanding these walks in which he took so much pleasure, these conversations in which he delighted, Conway felt that a thousand reasons required he should quit St. Siffrid's; and having no longer his health to plead, with a dejection the most marked upon his countenance, and sentiments the most uneasy in his heart; having expressed the high opinion he entertained of Mr. Harwood's kindness and hospitality, and the great obligations conferred upon him by the attentions of the ladies, he hastily mounted his horse, and slowly took the road to Strathener.

Ethelreda

Ethelreda followed him with her eyes till he disappeared. Then precipitately returning to her own room, "He is gone to Strathener!" cried she, "and Octavia, so unworthy the affection of such a man, will occupy all his time and thoughts, and we shall see him no more!" Ethelreda could scarcely restrain her tears at the thought: she was sorry to be deprived of the society of an amiable person; she was grieved that one apparently so ill calculated to promote the happiness and to become the companion of a rational man, should be destined to Conway, for whom she felt so much friendship! who deserved so much better! who apparently understood the value of other society than that of the frivolous and insipid Lady Octavia. She thought of her own situation and of Carlovile; and no longer able to resist the sadness that overpowered her, she gave way to tears, without knowing



knowing whether she wept for herself or for Conway. But more awake to her errors, than ready to excuse them even to herself, Ethelreda condemned herself for a weakness that in the strictness of her ideas she thought an outrage to propriety, and incompatible with her engagements and her duty. Whilst she thought of Carloville with added bitterness, and deplored the complicated misery of her situation, she resolved to forget, or at least not to cherish remembrances which must add to the repugnance she already felt towards him, and to reconcile herself to the painful idea of once more meeting him; an event she by no means thought improbable; though from the moment of his flight she had heard no tidings of him, and had almost ceased to remember such a man existed.

In leaving Ethelreda, Conway scarcely endured less poignant misery. That  
she

she was married, continually haunted his disturbed imagination: and no stranger to the profligacy of Carlovill's character, that she was married to a man so unworthy, added tenfold bitterness to the almost insupportable misfortune. His own marriage with Lady Octavia, and which he saw approaching, no longer filled his heart with uneasiness: grown careless of happiness, he had given up all thoughts of remonstrating with his father. Ethelreda was married to and Conway, to whom all women were indifferent, resigned himself to his destiny.

The innumerable obstacles that separated them, operated not however on the mind of Conway as a cure. He was continually forming pretences to visit at St. Siffred's, sometimes alone, sometimes accompanied by his mother, whose admiration of Ethelreda was scarcely less fervent than his own.

These

These visits Ethelreda returned with delight, arising, as she persuaded herself, from her extreme veneration for Mrs. Conway, the charms of her conversation, the affectionate dignity of her manners, and the partiality she continually expressed for her young visitor.

The contrast between this agreeable woman and her intended daughter, who indeed was seldom present at these morning calls, always filled Ethelreda with disgust, and extreme compassion for the fate of the accomplished and elegant Conway.

Thus deceived by her own heart, which, confiding in its innocence and rectitude, hid from Ethelreda half the danger of this intimacy so destructive to her peace, she gradually and imperceptibly confirmed her own unfortunate attachment and that of the not less unfortunate Conway; whilst the thorough conviction of its impropriety mutually  
barassed



harassed and distracted their minds, depressed their spirits, and undermined their health.

Three months passed heavily away; the autumn approached; and the winter would quickly follow it, that was to separate Ethelreda and Conway, that was to join Lady Octavia and her cousin in the most indissoluble union—a union, that, notwithstanding all her boasted philosophy, wounded the tender heart of Ethelreda and destroyed her repose.

The day that was fixed for the departure of the Strathener family rapidly approached, privately hastened by the influence of Lady Octavia on her uncle; who, dissatisfied, as well as her Ladyship, with the very moderate attentions and want of ardour in Conway towards his bride elect, had with his usual penetration dived into the motives of his frequent visits to St. Siffred's; and much displeased, though not much surprised,

prised, he inwardly determined to hasten the ceremony, all preliminaries to which had been previously adjusted between him and Lord Trecastle.

Lord Trecastle was an unpolished, honest, good sort of Welchman; very hospitable, very passionate, very good-humoured, and dotingly fond of his children, whom he indulged in all the whims and caprices that fancy could dictate or fortune procure. Yet he was so inveterately obstinate, that when once he had determined on any thing, which however he was extremely slow and irresolute in doing, not all the influence of his children, not all the entreaties of his friends, nor even the concurrence of his own judgment, could make him lay aside his purpose; though, to say the truth of this latter quality, the good Earl had but an indifferent share, still more indifferently exerted.

It was Lord Trecastle's first wish that  
his

his son should shine as a politician and a statesman. But the character was infinitely too grave and too laborious for the volatile and frivolous Lord Caerleon, who, with fine talents and a good understanding, was the most agreeable and finished coxcomb that ever existed. Without one grain of application or industry to pursue the line pointed out to him by his father, and in which Lord Trecastle was so anxious he should excel, Lord Caerleon had a seat in the House, where he sometimes made long and eloquent speeches, on subjects he had never considered or even heard of, with all the calm effrontery of a veteran politician who is conscious that he has acquired a reputation, and may talk nonsense with impunity; whilst the rapidity of his utterance, and his singular and judicious choice of phrases and quotations, always amused, and sometimes dazzled his more experienced auditors.

These



These ebullitions of wit and inconsistency were sure to impose on Lord Trecastle: and Lord Caerleon had only to say he had been speaking in the House, to obtain pardon for *any* misdemeanour, and to insure unlimited indulgence for all his numerous extravagancies and wild schemes, with whatever sums he chose to dispose of in their execution.

With such abilities to impose on him, Lord Caerleon and his father were the best friends in the world: and though Lord Trecastle's obstinacy sometimes interfered with his son's plans; yet, in all their contentions, the latter had manifestly so much the advantage, by reason of his before-mentioned auxiliaries, that Lord Trecastle usually declined the contest, thoroughly convinced of his son's superior abilities and brilliant talents.

The Honourable Meredith Conway was in every respect the reverse of his brother.

brother. Grave, penetrating, shrewd, artful, designing; planning with perspicacity, and executing with vigour; studious, even to mathematical precision, in the choice of his expressions, yet often at a loss for the proper word, which gave an air of hesitating caution to his discourse, by no means calculated favourably to prepossess his auditors; he was well educated and polished, but the slave of pride and avarice. Whenever either of these passions was thwarted, his rage subdued his caution; and to an observing eye, all his ambitious schemes for the aggrandizement of his rank and the accumulation of his fortune were clearly discernible. In these he believed consisted all his own happiness and that of his son; which he resolutely persisted in promoting his own way, though Henry Conway sometimes ventured to declare his notions of felicity were very different.

Mrs.

Mrs. Conway too, whose mildness of temper and love of quiet unfitted her for contention, sometimes coincided with her son. But their sentiments were so opposite to those of Mr. Conway, that these differences of opinion usually produced unpleasant altercations and gloomy looks; they were therefore generally avoided by Mrs. Conway, whose affection for her son made her inwardly lament, that in circumstances so essential their views so widely differed.



## C H A P. IX.

The Virtues conquer with a single look;  
 Such grace, such beauty, such victorious light  
 Live in their presence, stream in every glance,  
 That the soul, won, enamour'd and refin'd,  
 Grows their own image, pure ethereal flame.

LIBERTY.

**MRS. CONWAY** with increasing anxiety saw the day arrive that was to separate her from Ethelreda; and, determined to indulge herself in taking leave of her without the interruption of her niece's company, she went alone to St. Siffrid's.

Here she found Ethelreda and Mrs. Harwood in a dressing-room; the latter was at work, and on the countenance of the former were visibly seen the traces of tears.

"I come,

"I come, my dear Mrs. Harwood," said Mrs. Conway, "to take leave of you and Mrs. Carloville. We quit the country to-morrow! It is some weeks earlier than we intended. I am not however without hopes of seeing you in town," she continued.

Mrs. Harwood said her situation prevented travelling for some time, but added: "When I have quitted my room, I hope to persuade my sister and Mr. Harwood to pass a month in town."

Mrs. Conway politely and tenderly pressed Mrs. Carloville to promise she would be persuaded. "Nothing in the world," said she, rising to depart, "would give me so much pleasure, as the expectation of sometimes seeing you. I shall then have lost my son; and no one in the world could so amply supply the loss of his company as Mrs. Carloville, whose temper and disposition seem to me the counterpart of his! She tenderly

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kissed the cheek of the silent Ethelreda, and pressing her hand with affection, "Lady Octavia, my love, talks of calling on you this morning: but do not stay within on that account, she may possibly defer her visit till to-morrow." With a thousand good wishes and tender charges to be careful of her health, Mrs. Conway stepped into her carriage, leaving Ethelreda stupefied with the intelligence of Conway's speedy marriage, and determined to avail herself of the fore-knowledge of Octavia's visit, by walking into the park.

She returned not to the Castle till the sound of the second bell warned her to leave the watch tower, where she had been enjoying the melancholy pleasure of looking through a telescope towards Strathener, and in fancying she saw Conway hand his mother from the carriage.

On returning to the house she saw lying



ing on a table cards with the names of Lady Octavia and Mr. Conway. "He has been here then with Lady Octavia!" said she to herself in a low and tremulous tone. "They go to-morrow! and I may never see him again! But why do I wish it?" cried she, wildly clasping her hands, "am I not the wife of Carloville?"

The terrible name sounded tremendously in her ears as she pronounced it; and the footsteps and voices of persons approaching filled her with fears lest her passionate exclamation had been heard, and that a thousand discoveries would be made by Harwood and her sister from a countenance covered with confusion, and agitated by the cruelest apprehensions. She drew her hat over her eyes, and, turning towards the window, endeavoured to recover her tranquillity.

Unconscious of what was passing, her

eyes fixed but looking at nothing, she stood with her back towards the door, when the voice of Lord Caerleon disturbed her reverie, and obliged her to look round. The impertinent attentions and florid compliments with which Lord Caerleon always accosted her, had long been disgusting and irksome; and the exhausted spirits of Ethelreda at this unpleasant and unexpected interruption distressed her almost to tears; she looked towards the door in hopeless expectation of seeing more visitors.

"I hope I do not interrupt you, Madam?" said Lord Caerleon, observing something extraordinary in her looks and manner.

"No, my Lord," replied she with evident insincerity. "On the contrary, your arrival is extremely well timed. I have been copying the Colosseum this morning; but I am apprehensive I have made some capital mistakes in the perspective.

spective. Do, my Lord, correct them for me," continued Ethelreda, anxious to engage him in some employment till the arrival of Mr. Harwood or her sister.

"Anfiteatro Flavio non è circo, è elliptico," said he, affectedly attempting to mend some lines in the perspective.

"But why do I spend my time upon the Colosseum?" cried he, throwing down the pencil, and seizing Ethelreda's hand.

"These few short moments I have gained, may be used to more advantage! Let us go to Rome, charming Mrs. Carloville! There you may employ yourself from morning till night, in taking views of the most magnificent city in the world. We will make the whole tour of Italy together; and at Venice, for I am persuaded *you* will prefer it, we will hire a palazzo, and, freed from the disagreeable and irksome idea of dependence, you shall rule me and my fortune with a sway the most absolute!"



“What,” cried the astonished Ethelreda, endeavouring to extricate her hand, which he forcibly held, “what have I done to deserve this treatment? Tell me instantly!” with a kind of agonized impatience, “tell me how I have brought upon myself this insulting proposal? Is it possible you, Lord Caerleon, can forget what is due to a woman of character? Do you forget my family? Do you forget that I am married?”

All the hereditary pride of ancestry, all the indignation of affronted virtue, which the unmerited insult roused in the heart of Ethelreda, threw something so commanding into her manner, that, letting go her hand, for a moment the unparalleled effrontery of Lord Caerleon deserted him, and he remained silent, in evident and painful confusion. But, speedily recovering his usual undaunted assurance, “Really, my pretty Ethelreda, I know every syllable you have been

been saying to me in so awful a tone. I believe, however," said he with an ironical sneer, showing the card with Conway's name, "that my fighting cousin is not *quite* so unsuccessful. But believe me, Mrs. Carloville, je suis le meilleur parti."

"Your cruel insults, and still more insulting suspicions," cried Ethelreda, "can only be equalled by your insolence. Oh! you are determined that to you I shall owe the bitterest moments of my life. To your introduction must I place my present unfortunate connection; and deserted and friendless as I am, you think to wound my feelings with impunity. But I have still a protection in my brother's affection;" resolutely rising, and walking towards the door.

"I acknowledge your claims on Mr. Harwood's affection," said Cæreleon, placing himself so as to intercept her retreat, "and I can do him the justice to

believe he would not be slow in answering them; and I am sure Mrs. Carloville has generosity enough to believe, that nothing but the consciousness of having *offended her* most unpardonably, could make me at the moment of such an appeal detain her in solicitation of her forgiveness. I earnestly entreat your pardon, Mrs. Carloville," continued he. "To say that I promise never to offend you by my attentions or proposals, is to offend again: but give me leave to add, were you disengaged, and disposed to admit my pretensions, there is not a woman in the world besides, however elevated her rank, on whom I would bestow my fortune and my title."

Of her pardon in consideration of his apology, Mrs. Carloville assured him: but too proud to thank him for the ostentatiously condescending manner in which he made it, she coldly bid him



good morrow; and Lord Caerleon took his departure, mortified at the figure he had made, ashamed of his proposals, his vanity not a little wounded by the contempt with which they had been received, and penetrated with the accumulated misfortunes of Mrs. Carloville, with which she had so pathetically reproached him as the cause.

The heart of Lord Caerleon, though warped by example, and swayed by fashion, was not naturally bad: but vanity and affectation divided him between them; and three or four years residence in Italy and France had operated so powerfully to form his character, that Lord Caerleon, who before his departure was a handsome, agreeable coxcomb with very little harm in him, had returned a supercilious mixture of French levity and Italian profligacy. For the manners of the latter country he was a declared advocate—he could speak in

no language but Italian; he could bear no sounds but Italian; all other music was *tramontane* and horrid; the face of his own country was detestable, compared to the banks of the *Brenta*; and the scrubby-looking cropped trees about Rome he preferred to the most luxuriant woods in Wales. No wonder then, that in support of his favourite system he proposed himself as the *cavaliere servente* of Mrs. Carloville, whose beauty in all probability would have displeased him, had not her large dark eyes and regular features reminded him of the interesting Venetian ladies.

## C H A P. X.

— His happiest choice too late  
Shall meet already link'd and wedlock-bound  
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame;  
Which infinite calamity shall cause  
To human life, and household peace confound.

PAR. LOST, book x.

CONWAY felt no very violent disappointment at meeting none of the inhabitants of the Castle. To have seen Ethelreda, and to have taken leave of her coldly and formally under the scrutinising eye of Octavia, would have been infinitely more painful than to depart without seeing her at all. Having used a hundred vain pretences to go alone, notwithstanding Lady Octavia's declared intention of accompanying him, he was at last obliged to submit to the punishment



ment of joining her on horseback in her purposed visit to St. Siffred's.

This mortifying interruption did not serve to raise his spirits, or stimulate him to be more attentive; nor did the continual efforts of his companion to draw him into conversation produce more than dull monosyllables, to questions twice repeated; and absent answers to remarks, in the opinion of Lady Octavia the most interesting and sentimental.

This ill-assorted party was returning slowly from the Castle, if possible more silent than it came; for Octavia, irritated by his extreme absence, with some difficulty restrained herself from upbraidings, in anxious and fullen expectation of something like an apology from Conway. But she might have waited for ever; for, lost in his own unpleasant reflections, he had forgotten that she existed, and no more dreamed of speaking  
to

to her than if she had been ten leagues instead of ten steps from his elbow.

Lady Octavia's patience at length was exhausted :—" Mrs. Carloville would have been treated with more civility," said she, in a tone of ironical asperity ; " or her visible partiality is much misplaced."

" Mrs. Carloville !" said Conway, instantly turning his horse's head and taking some steps towards the Castle, " I do not see her."

" Nor I either," cried Octavia, bursting into an hysterical laugh ; " but the magic of her name has completely roused you from your reverie. I am astonished," continued she, " that the prudent, reserved, delicate Mrs. Carloville does not take more pains to conceal her scandalous preference. The scrupulous Mr. Conway, too, seems to have reconciled himself to the character of a married

ried woman's gallant, which he maintains with wonderful ——"

"Utter not another syllable, Lady Octavia, to the prejudice of Mrs. Carloville's reputation, or, by heavens, you will provoke me to tell you truths too severe for an envious and irritated woman to bear!" Conway's lips trembled with passion whilst he spoke in a voice that made Octavia start with terror, whilst he proceeded, his respiration almost stopt by his rage: "That I have never loved you, you must have perceived; and a woman with any sentiment of pride, of modesty or true delicacy, would have shrunk from the very shadow of persecuting a man into affection. That I *must* marry you, you know as well as I do, because I have no resources independent of my father: but if in your marriage you expect happiness and find yourself disappointed, remember



member that your husband forewarned you of the vanity of your expectations."

The tone, the piercing eye of Conway directed towards her as he spoke, almost annihilated the astonished Octavia : the vehemence of his manner, and the courage with which he told her his dislike, surprised her more than the explanation of his sentiments. But, more mortified than grieved, more stimulated to revenge than oppressed by the knowledge of her unreturned preference, she attempted not to speak ; she thought not of recriminating by words, sensibly persuaded that conciliatory measures were more expedient than open defiance.

Conway, whose violent agitation a few moments of silence and reflection had completely calmed, was grieved to the heart at having spoken so harshly, in the fury of his passion, to a woman who, notwithstanding his incredulity on the subject, *might* love him with unfeigned affection :

affection : but the acrimony and envy with which Octavia had spoken of Mrs. Carlville recurring to his mind, would prevent him from apologizing for his own asperity ; and the hints she had given of Ethelreda's preference, whilst they raised a momentary pleasure in his breast, determined him to make one more effort to see her before his departure, though he knew not himself what purpose could possibly be answered by so hopeless yet fondly desired an indulgence.

When this extraordinary pair of lovers returned to the Castle, they were met by Mrs. Conway, who observed the extreme vexation in their countenances, and drew from thence presages fatal to her own peace and that of her family. Lady Octavia dismounted from her horse with the assistance of a servant, and, slightly speaking, hurried into the house :

“ Do

“Do not expect me at dinner, Madam,” said Conway to his mother, whose eyes were fixed on him with a strong expression of grief and enquiry. “I intend to lengthen my ride; in all probability I shall not return in time.” Without waiting for an answer he spurred his horse, and, calling to his servant not to follow him, was soon at a considerable distance from Strathener.

The tumultuous agitation of his mind subsided by degrees; and as he grew more calm, the consequences of his rashness in speaking so unguardedly to Octavia struck him forcibly. “She will infallibly discover to my father my unfortunate predilection,” said he to himself; “she will revenge herself on me, by attacking the unblemished character of Ethelreda; and by hastening my marriage my father will sufficiently punish my intemperate passion.”

The horse had insensibly wandered  
a con-



a considerable distance, when, meeting with the road to St. Siffred's, to take which for some months he had been constantly accustomed, he walked on at a quick pace, unheeded by his master, who awoke not from his perplexing dreams till the horse stopped at the inner gate.

The sight of the Castle, and the sudden appearance of Caerleon, who was about to depart at the moment of Conway's arrival, disconcerted and surprised him so much, that, instantly turning his horse's head, he took the road back without uttering a syllable.

He was, however ill disposed for conversation, speedily joined by his cousin, who, having not yet forgotten his recent mortification, was equally silent. Conway still heavily meditated on his own grievances; but Lord Caerleon, whose spirits seldom deserted him, suddenly bursting into a laugh, called to his companion :

panion; "Pray, Conway, may I ask what brought you back so soon to St. Siffred's? Was it to look for me? That certainly was the *ostensible* part of your errand, or you would not have returned so instantaneously at the sight of me."

"Really," said Conway, half smiling at the awkwardness of such a rencontre, "nothing was farther from my thoughts. When I left Strathener," continued he, "I intended going towards the beach; and how I got to St. Siffred's —"

"I must ask your horse, I suppose?"

"My horse," said Conway, "does not speak *toscanamente*; and to be answered in the language of the Hoby-ninms would be grating beyond all endurance." Here Conway turned into another road, and Lord Caerleon pursued his way to Strathener, not too much pleased at his cousin's repartee, and confirmed

firmed in those suspicions he had before hinted to Ethelreda.

If the visible confusion of Conway had surprised Lord Caerleon, the apparent absence and depression that seemed to have spread itself over the inhabitants of Strathener Castle was not less a matter of speculation. That Lady Mariamne was silent and reserved, he thought was owing to an accumulation of haughtiness; that Lady Octavia was low-spirited, he attributed to an overflow of sentiment; and his aunt he knew was subject to reveries: but why Sir Francis and his uncle should look so gloomy, he was at a loss to explain to himself. Indeed, he seldom gave himself the trouble to discover what motives actuated those of his own family, either to loquacity or silence; but at length, diverted from his reflections by the woeful countenance of Sir Francis, Lord Caerleon enquired if  
any



any thing had happened to occasion so melancholy a visage?

Sir Francis hesitated, and without answering the question—"Pray, my lord, has any thing *particular* happened to you?"

"No," said Caerleon carelessly; "but the sight of so many doleful faces has had a strange effect on my spirits."

"I protest that is exactly my case, for till your Lordship's arrival I was really in excellent spirits: but, as you say, example has a wonderful effect."

"Pray, Lord Caerleon," said Mrs. Conway, who, as evening approached, betrayed manifest signs of uneasiness, "do you know any thing of Henry?"

"Mr. Henry Conway," said Lord Caerleon, the sneer at *la lingua Toscana* still fresh in his memory, "when I saw him last, was in about as pleasant a temper as the present company;

I be-

I believe, meditating a visit to the Castle."

"To the Castle!" exclaimed Mr. Conway with surprise and agitation. "You do not know what carried him to the Castle, Lord Caerleon?"

"Indeed I do not," said Caerleon rising, and gaping repeatedly; "it appeared to me he did not know himself very clearly. I had some thoughts of asking him," continued he, "but he took a very precipitate leave, or rather, none at all. We shall see him at supper—perhaps."

This information by no means contributed to restore gaiety to the silent party. Mr. Conway staid not many moments in the room, but departed to his study.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XI.

Che non puo far d'un cuor, ch' abbia soggetto,  
Questo crudel e traditor Amore!

**C**ONWAY, when he left his cousin, took the first road that presented itself, merely because he would not return to Strathmore. He was excessively distressed at the (unfortunate) dissensions of the morning; but that he had met Lord Caerleon so much to his purpose, gave him not much concern. He knew him too careless of the affairs of his family, and too proud and vainly, to repeat any trivial circumstance to his disadvantage; unconscious of the interest Lord Caerleon took in everything relating to Ethelred, and treading nothing but the machinations of Lady Octavia.



In this pitiable state of mind Conway passed all the remainder of the day; riding from one place to another for relief, but more especially to avoid meeting any living creature to whom it would be necessary for him to speak. Sometimes his thoughts were occupied in contriving how to see Ethelreda—A thousand plans were formed, and rejected as speedily; at one moment he would detest himself for wishing to involve her in all the miseries of hopeless passion, which he himself felt so acutely; and then the wretched hope that she was equally unfortunate, whilst he abhorred himself for encouraging it, would animate him to an explanation. “If I can speak to her—if I tell her my despair; she will pity me, and her compassion will console me for the miseries of my whole life. But she is married! and her purity will take alarm at the bare idea of hearing me confess how

much I love her: she will forgive me, but she will refuse to see me, and I shall lose the melancholy pleasure of looking at her—of hearing her speak!

It grew dark whilst Conway continued making these incoherent reflections. He had lost his way; he had taken no refreshment; he had not even recollected that any was necessary to his existence; and he continued wandering in the dark in uncertainty three hours, during which he had repeatedly been wetted by showers; till at eleven o'clock he found himself, without any effort on his part, at Strathener, undetermined and irresolute whether he should go that moment to St. Siffrid's, or give up his idle hopes for ever.

\* He went however into the Castle. The family had separated some time: Mrs. Conway alone in the eating-parlour waited her son's arrival. She heard him as he entered the room, and knew his step;

she rose to walk towards him; but his countenance frightened her, she doubted whether it was her son: "Is it you, Henry?"

"It is," said he. "For heaven's sake, what is the matter? What has happened to you?"

"Nothing! Nothing has happened!" said he hastily. "You know I am unhappy; you know all the world cannot make me otherwise; yet you ask me what has happened, as if my situation were not the most miserable and hopeless." He took a candle from the table and walked towards the door—he stood there some moments in silence, then wished his mother good night, and disappeared.

He went however into the castle. His family had separated some time: Miss Conway alone in the evening, without waiting for her son's arrival, she heard him as he entered the room and knew his step.

The



The morning, though foggy, was very fine; and Mr. Conway, having charged the ladies to be ready at eight, as he intended taking the fourth place in their coach, waited in a very indifferent humour their arrival.

Henry Conway, with Lord Trecaſtle, Lord Caerleon and Sir Francis L'Eſterling, had reſolved to make part of their journey on horſeback. Sir Francis wiſhed for Lord Caerleon's opinion on a houſe he was about to take; it was that which Mr. Harwood had ſo lately quitted, and which was ſtill without a tenant. Lady Marianne had given a ſort of half conſent to living there in the ſummer; and as her ladyſhip uſually reſuſed to give any to Sir Francis's propoſals, he, preſuming on her gracious condeſcenſion, had determined to take it, provided it met with Lord Caerleon's approbation; very wiſely concluding if his brother liked it he ſhould alſo,

and

G. 3.

and.

and that if such an arrangement had been disagreeable to his lady, she would flatly have forbidden even his looking at Kilgaren-hall.

Lord Treacastle, with his usual hospitality, had cordially entreated his son-in-law to take up his summer residence at Strathener; and Sir Francis would willingly have complied; but the Castle, though not so large, was scarcely less dreary than St. Siffid's; and a circumstance had occurred to confirm him in what he had before strongly suspected, that Strathener was not less the abode of ghosts than the deserted St. Siffid's; and to these his aversion was so rooted, that not even Lord Caerleon's example could have reconciled him to them, though his model had professed an attachment as strong as that of some of the illustrious and honourable house of Hohenzollern.

The restless footsteps of Conway, who had

had passed the night in walking his room, contributed mostly towards Sir Francis's removal; for in effect the old rooms of the Castle were very seldom visited by any of the inhabitants of the other world: though, as is generally the case with *castles*, Strathener had procured itself the reputation of being as *creditably haunted*, as any castle or priory in the principality.

The coach and its company were departed: and the gentlemen only waited for Conway, when he made his appearance in the court, and entreated them to go on before him. His horse, he said, must be shod, and he would overtake them on the road or at Kilgaren.

Lord Caerleon roguishly said, he would wait for him, and Sir Francis very complaisantly proposed to do the same; but Lord Treastle, finding himself in danger either of waiting an hour or of riding alone, proposed to go on



with Sir Francis; and Lord Caerleon, who only meant to enjoy his cousin's embarrassment (for he had penetrated his motive), immediately followed. Conway watched them out of sight: then charging his servant to meet him on the road with the horses, he set out on foot for St. Siffred's; having determined in his own mind, formally to take leave of the ladies with all the calmness of an indifferent person; but to go, without seeing Ethelreda, was absolutely impossible. He walked extremely fast, and arrived at the Castle without having met a creature. As it happened, there were no servants about the courts; the doors were only latched, and Conway traversed without any impediment the long galleries and passages, till he came to the room in which he knew the ladies usually passed their mornings. He opened the door gently, and saw alone,

alone, at the upper end, Ethelreda leaning her head upon her hands. Conway would have returned without speaking; but the sound of his footsteps alarmed her, and she looked round. "Is it possible?" she exclaimed involuntarily, and in the utmost confusion.

"You are undoubtedly surprised to see me," said Conway, advancing towards her. "I came, Mrs. Carloville, to see you and Mrs. Harwood, and to ask if I can execute any commissions for you in town?"—looking towards the harp that stood near.

"You are very good. Shall I trouble you to order some music for me?"

Conway made no answer; and both for several minutes sat in the most distressing silence. At length Ethelreda arose—"I will let my sister know you are here."

"By no means!" cried Conway, starting from his chair, and walking towards

the door, which he shut. "I cannot leave you, Mrs. Carloville!"

"Mr. Conway!" — said Ethelreda, turning pale, and then blushing deeply. "I feel the impropriety of telling you so; I feel that I am banishing myself from you for ever! Yet I cannot avoid making the most hopeless and miserable passion my excuse for a thousand unpardonable absurdities, of which I have been guilty. — I see your astonishment, your indignation! You think me mad, perhaps; but my reason has not quite deserted me, though I tell you — that I am the most wretched creature in existence!"

Ethelreda burst into tears, which she would have given worlds to restrain.

"I knew I should distress you, Ethelreda," said he; "but I am become selfish, and the tears you are now shedding, will, for the remainder of my life, be my only consolation." As he spoke, his

voice



voice faltered so much, the last words were scarcely intelligible : his whole appearance was so extraordinary, the tone of his voice was so piercing, and in his eye and on his cheek were such evident symptoms of fever, that Erhelreda actually concluded he was delirious ; and, unable to articulate a syllable, she saw him depart precipitately, and apparently with sensations of the keenest anguish ; without any effort, on her part, either to speak to or detain him.

“ Oh Conway !” said she, “ If my wretchedness will alleviate yours, why did you depart till I had told you all my sufferings ; till I had convinced you, mine were more poignant ?”

## C H A P. XII.

Equale è di pazzia segno più espresso,

Che per altri voler, perder se stesso?

ARIOSO, cant. xxy.

**W**HEN Conway joined his companions, the tumult of his spirits had partly subsided : but the exertion of riding had considerably increased his fever ; and the fatigues of the preceding day, the sleepless night, and the distressing events of the morning, had rendered him so languid, that, scarcely able to proceed, he was repeatedly on the point of declaring his inability, and his intention of returning to Strathener. But lest Lord Caerleon, and more especially his father, should doubt the sincerity of his indisposition, and set it down only as an excuse to return ; tenderness for the character of

Mrs. Carlovile, and a despairing carelessness about what might befall himself, reanimated him to pursue his journey, and even to appear cheerful; whilst his countenance and his incoherent conversation gave evident tokens of bodily indisposition and mental derangement.

These distressing symptoms however were lost on his companions, whose hearts more at ease prevented them from sympathizing in his miseries. Lord Caerleon protested he was the most singular personage he had ever met with: he was at a loss to know what capricious *bizarre* could induce a man to throw so many absurdities into his manners and discourse: but Lord Trecastle with more feeling and discernment declared his nephew was unfit to ride on horseback; and without consulting him dispatched a servant to detain the coach till Conway's arrival, intending to persuade him to give up his horse



horse to his father, and take the vacant seat in the coach.

Lord Treastle was impatient to execute his judicious arrangement; he therefore left Sir Francis and his son at Kilgaren; and persuading Conway without much difficulty to proceed with him, they soon overtook the carriage.

Conway would willingly have continued his journey on horseback; but the united entreaties of his father and mother and Lord Treastle at length prevailed on him to take a place in the coach. Mrs. Conway, shocked beyond measure at his appearance, besought him to tell her what ailed him, and how long he had been ill.

Conway was grieved at his mother's distress, and endeavoured to make her think lightly of his illness, declaring it was only a cold occasioned by the showers that had wetted him quite through the night before. "If I had gone to bed,"

bed," continued he, "I might perhaps have escaped it; but I am certain I should not have slept; and when that is the case, it is of very little consequence whether a man passes the night in his bed, or in walking his room!"

"Good heavens! my dear Henry, did you then pass the night in your damp clothes? How much you distress and alarm me!"

"I certainly had not the smallest intention of doing either the one or the other. But," continued he, with a smile, "do not lament it so much, and do not by any means alarm yourself; for it is my usual manner of passing the night, and what one is accustomed to cannot have bad consequences."

"You mean, when you are at sea?"

"Always. Indeed I find it infinitely more refreshing than sleep."

Mrs. Conway now perceived that her son talked without knowing himself what

what he said; she entreated him to compose himself, and endeavour to sleep a little in the carriage.

Without apologizing to either of the ladies, or indeed without knowing they were present, Conway soon fell into a dozing sleep, to the very great satisfaction of his mother, who expected him to wake recruited and well.

Neither Lady Octavia nor her sister had taken the trouble to say they were sorry for his illness, nor had they tried to console and re-assure Mrs. Conway, who expressed her apprehensions in the most affecting manner. Lady Mariamne kept her face turned towards one of the windows; and Octavia, entirely occupied with her resentment, had none of the traces of good humour on her countenance or in her manner.

The journey was performed without much satisfaction to any of the party; the fullness of the two ladies continued



nied without intermission through the whole of it; and Mrs. Conway's consternation increased with her son's disorder, which, instead of proving only a temporary cold, seemed to threaten a most serious illness. Had it been possible to have persuaded him, Mrs. Conway would have remained on the road; but, with all the vehemence of a feverish and agitated mind, he persisted in declaring he was well, and in pursuing his journey; so that, when he reached London, entirely exhausted in strength and no longer able to oppose the requests of his mother, he submitted to see a physician, who pronounced him in a high fever. His disorder became rapidly worse: in his delirium, which lasted many days without intermission, he incessantly protested against a marriage with Octavia; and his father heard him declare, with horror, he would die to avoid it. Mrs. Conway's grief, and that  
of

the whole family, was little short of distraction; even Gaerleon, whose volatile spirits and love of amusement had seldom given way, was continually waiting in the house for favourable account. Lady Octavia alone seemed studious to shew her indifference, if possible without any mixture of resentment: she regularly sent her servant every day to make enquiries, whilst she pursued her amusements with as much avidity as if nothing had occurred to interrupt them. Lord Treastle, much displeased at such unfeeling conduct, tried to controul Lady Octavia by his commands; but she declared so positively she should die if she did not amuse herself, that the point was not carried, and Lord Treastle contented himself with declaring his nephew should have his free consent to set aside the marriage.

This declaration, alarming as it would have been to Mr. Conway, never came

to his knowledge. His whole time was occupied in watching and attendance on his son, whose life was despaired of, and whom his physicians owned it was no longer in the power of medicine to save.

Many were the vows and promises made by Mr. Conway of never interfering in his future happiness, should Conway be restored. Whether their sincerity or Mrs. Conway's prayers were most efficacious, certain it is a favourable turn in the disorder began to give the physicians hopes of the life of their patient. These hopes they cautiously communicated to his mother, who, forgetting all her fatigues, resolutely persisted in attending her son; re-animated with the probability of saving his life, and delighting herself with the idea that in a great measure he owed it to her care and unremitted watching.

CHAP.



Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
 To what they were before.

MACBETH.

**SCARCELY** less melancholy and desponding passed the days of Ethelreda. A prey to the most acute and heart-rending sorrows, no objects had the power of alleviating them, nor of drawing her thoughts one moment from the distracted image of Conway. If she walked on the beach, she saw no other object; if she shut herself from company, she fancied she still saw him, worn down by fever and deprived of intellects and reflection. Not a day passed in which she did not rise with the expectation of hearing some melancholy and fatal tidings concerning him; for that he still existed,

existed, she could scarcely persuade herself. Or if this terrible idea for a moment deserted her, the certainty of his marriage would rush into her mind, and destroy every remaining wish for happiness.

In this pitiable state, torn and harassed by a thousand fears, the temper of Ethelreda was become irritable, and that sweetness that never failed to charm was seldom discernible in her character. Of this change in her disposition she was not insensible; but she had lost all desire to please, and attempted not to conquer it, or to conceal that she was dissatisfied and unhappy.

This appearance of discontent did not fail to strike Mrs. Harwood with compassion and sorrow. She would willingly have enquired the cause, but Ethelreda industriously avoided all conversation that could lead to the subject of her depression and melancholy; and  
when

when entreated to tell it, she would declare her spirits were not unusually low, or perhaps, with some impatience, that her dejection was constitutional. These answers and evasions increased Mrs. Harwood's tender apprehensions for the peace of her sister; and that she had lost her confidence, was a source of never-failing regret.

Months rolled away imperceptibly; it was January, and Ethelreda was almost entirely confined to her sister's room, who had lain-in of a daughter. This circumstance in some measure diverted her sorrows; and an ardent desire to conceal them from her sister, disguised, without diminishing, them. Here she passed the day in reading, or in appearing to read, or in caressing the children, whilst she inwardly meditated on her own misfortunes, and those of Conway.

When Harwood was at home, which  
was



was generally the case, he spent most of his time in his wife's room; and Ethelreda, eagerly seizing the first opportunity of being alone, would retire to some unfrequented room, sure of enjoying uninterrupted solitude. These desolate moments were those in which Ethelreda placed the only remaining pleasure of her life. She could there indulge herself in tears or in conversations, secure that she should neither be surprised nor overheard.

\* \* \* \* \*

But the fate of Conway's health placing him even at a distance, Lord Belton, though he might as well take a trip to the Continent with him, of Conway, Lord Belton, who was going to escort his sister to England. Mrs. Belton had joined Paris for Brussels, in company with some of the richest of distinction, who, fancying

Lord

Lord Caerleon, who, though he had been too much accustomed to uninterrupted prosperity to feel much for the sufferings of others, yet saw Conway's with some sorrow; and as absence never failed to relieve his lordship's miseries, the recollection of Ethelreda's beauty and charms grew fainter from day to day, and he no longer envied but pitied the preference he imagined he had discovered in his cousin's favour; resolving, as the most essential service he could do Conway and his sister, to prevent the latter from marrying him.

But the state of Conway's health still placing that event at a distance, Lord Caerleon thought he might as well take a trip to the Continent with a friend of Conway's, Lord Beralstone, who was going to escort his sister to England. Miss Beralstone had quitted Paris for Brussels, in company with some foreigners of distinction, who, fancying themselves

themselves obnoxious to the rising faction, were amongst the first to emigrate. But, as the Austrian Netherlands were not thought to be in any state of security from the invading armies, Lord Beralstone was anxious to see his sister safe in England, and to offer an asylum to friends who had shown her many attentions during the time her education detained her in Paris.

Miss Beralstone was near nineteen years of age; tall, finely made, with very light-brown hair, large dark-blue eyes, dark eyelashes and brows, and the reddest lips and the whitest teeth in the world; with manners so soft and engaging it was absolutely impossible, for Lord Caerleon especially, to see her without expressing the warmest admiration. He therefore, in the course of three days' residence with her at the house of her friend, Madame de Clerac-Auxerre, had found so many opportu-



nities of paying elegant *Italian* compliments to *la bella Rosmunda*, in spite of the vigilant attentions of the young Count, that he had nearly made formal proposals to the lady and her brother, when an unexpected event precipitately and effectually altered the course of his operations.

Lord Beralstone, and his friend De Clerac strolled out together one morning whilst Caerleon sat by the harpsichord watching the "flying fingers" of the beautiful Rosamond, and listening to the sweeter melody of her voice. In the course of their rambles Beralstone recognized two English acquaintances, whom De Clerac very politely entreated to dine with him. The ladies were otherwise engaged; and De Clerac, who professed to dote on English manners, tried all in his power to make them tipsy. In this very gentlemanlike contest the Count very nearly succeeded with

with his guests, but with himself still more completely ; for he could scarcely support himself on his feet, and was become so extremely noisy and riotous, and so determined on going to a gaming-hotel in the neighbourhood, that his party had no power of refusing.

Here they met with several of De Clerac's friends, playing games of chance. Lord Beralstone, Sir Philip Almersley and his brother immediately began to bet ; and Caerleon and De Clèrac, who were particularly troublesome to the players, strolled into another room.

De Clerac immediately proposed to a gentleman in a German uniform, apparently of his acquaintance, to play. He consented, and they sat down. Caerleon was still sufficiently in his senses to perceive that the Count might be plundered with impunity ; and though he was by no means clear enough to pro-

nounce his antagonist a cheat, he insisted, after a few moments' observation, on De Clerac's returning with him to his own house.

The stranger resented Lord Caerleon's behaviour in rather rude terms. Caerleon, always easily irritated, did not now wait for provocation to justify such an outrage, but most unceremoniously knocked him down; and, leaving him on the floor, walked very leisurely into the street with as much coolness as if nothing unusual had occurred.

He was presently overtaken by the stranger, whom De Clerac was incapable of following. "Draw! Caerleon!" cried he.

Caerleon immediately complied; and, notwithstanding his state of inebriety, ran his antagonist through, who fell immediately. Caerleon concluded he was dead; and though he was scarcely in his senses during the whole of this transaction,



action, yet strongly prepossessed with the idea of having been the aggressor in this unfortunate rencontre, Caerleon thought his only security was in making his escape.

From Ostend he wrote to Lord Beralstone, informing him that an express from his father had occasioned his precipitate removal. Of De Clerac he said nothing, perfectly secure that the above-mentioned circumstances would never transpire by his means, and as he was the only spectator, no other was to be feared.

When Lord Caerleon's recollection returned, he repented his precipitancy; and a thousand fears lest he should lose ground in the good opinion of Rosamond Beralstone, made him a thousand times resolve to return to Brussels, to which the possibility of his not having killed the man with whom he fought, greatly added; when the fol-

lowing paragraph, in a London paper, dated Brussels, effectually prevented his return, and filled his volatile head with new projects :

“ A few nights since, the body of a gentleman was discovered lying near the Hotel de —, bathed in blood. It is supposed a duel, in consequence of a quarrel at play, was the cause of this unfortunate event. On searching the pockets of the deceased, two letters were found, directed to The Hon. F. Carloville.”

Caerleon was thunderstruck at this extraordinary news; and particularly that he should not have recognised Carloville at the time. But this was easily accounted for. He now recollected the circumstance of the stranger's calling him by his name, which, with the place, corresponded so exactly that he no longer doubted having been the  
unfortunate

unfortunate avenger of Ethelreda's injuries.

For some days this melancholy adventure preyed upon his spirits, and superseded every wish for amusement or self-gratification. But it was now Ethelreda's turn to reign again. Ethelreda a widow! Conway positively engaged! These were irresistible inducements. "Adio, Rosmunda!" said the versatile Caerleon, as he seated himself in a chaise and four, determined not to stop five minutes on the road to St. Siffrid's; and not till he was within ten yards of the gates, did he recollect the impropriety of first dispatching the husband, and himself bringing the tidings to the widow. Some remembrance of the insulting proposals he had once made helped to convince him his errand wanted the colour of success; he for a moment thought of making over all his



advantages to his cousin ; and, in a fit of generosity too sudden to last, resolved to plead the cause of Conway with all his senatorial eloquence.

## C H A P. XIV.

Friendship is constant in all other things,  
 Save in the office and affairs of love :  
 Therefore, all hearts in love, use your own tongue ;  
 Let every eye negotiate for itself,  
 And trust no agent : beauty is a witch  
 Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.

SHAKESPEARE.

**I**T was the evening of a snowy day,  
 and Ethelreda had stationed herself in  
 the old drawing-room, insensible of  
 cold, and regardless of the bats that  
 hung upon the crimson velvet and  
 faded portraits of her ancestors ; when  
 the sound of feet in the long gallery  
 made her start, and walk towards the  
 door. It opened however before she  
 reached it : an old servant with some  
 trouble had discovered her retreat.

H 5

“ Is

"Is it you, Llewellyn?" said Ethelreda.

"A gentleman, madam!" and he immediately shut the door after a stranger, who was so much muffled up she could see nothing of his face.

This intrusion, with such an air of mystery, had both astonished and terrified her so much, that she attempted to speak but could not; her faculties were suspended, she did not breathe, firmly believing it was Carloville himself.

The stranger, scarcely less agitated, fixed his eyes upon her some moments in silence: "You do not condescend to remember me, madam?"—said he in a faltering tone.

Ethelreda was still silent.

"If you cannot pardon me, Mrs. Carloville—"

"It is Lord Caerleon's voice!"—exclaimed Ethelreda, recovering from her terror.

"I know not what to say, or how to begin



begin a recital," said Caerleon. "I have broken in upon you so abruptly, that instead of proceeding to the melancholy story I came purposely to relate, I ought to apologize for my intrusion, which has so needlessly alarmed you."

"What story?—Whom do you mean?—Is it Mrs. Conway?—Is it—does it concern—?" Twice Ethelreda was on the point of naming the person most in her thoughts; but the fear of hearing some fatal confirmation of all she apprehended took from her the power of utterance.

Lord Caerleon, alarmed at the paleness of her countenance, hesitated—stopped.

"I beseech you to tell me"—cried Ethelreda, "tell me instantly! I cannot bear this suspense—Without any preamble—tell me this moment what brings you here?"

"I came to tell you, madam," said

H 6

Caerleon,

Caerleon, surprised at her vehemence, "that you are released from all ties—that Mr. Carloville is no longer—is dead!"

Ethelreda made no answer. She leaned against the wall to support herself, and, pointing towards the door, shook her head, as if she doubted the truth of this intelligence.

"I assure you upon my honour," cried Caerleon, "that I have spoken only the truth."

"I know not how to believe you—" said Ethelreda faintly. "And pardon me, Lord Caerleon, if I tell you, I think your choosing to be the means of giving me this information, whether true or false, is a new insult."

"Heavens and earth!" cried Caerleon, stamping passionately with his foot: "Do you think me capable of it?—And do you imagine, madam, I would impose on you with *lies*?"

"You

"You terrify me, sir," said Ethelreda, endeavouring to reach the door, though she could scarcely support herself.

Lord Caerleon offered his arm.

"Suffer me to leave you here. I will inform Mr. Harwood of your lordship's arrival."

"I was about to request it of you, madam," again stamping with passion at her refusal of his assistance. "Will you permit me to *follow* you, madam?"

Ethelreda made no reply; but silently led the way to Harwood's library, where she left her disguised visitor whilst she went to inform her brother of the guest that awaited him.

Harwood was, as usual, in his wife's dressing-room. Ethelreda briefly told who was in his library, and begged him to hasten down stairs. Notwithstanding, he staid to express his surprise, and declare his total ignorance as to the business



ness that could procure him a visit from Lord Caerleon in the depth of winter.

In the mean time Caerleon had thrown off his fur wrappings, and was meditating in what manner and upon what terms he should address Ethelred. In the heat of his anger he could not forbear making some observations not very flattering to her disposition; such as, "no woman, however amiable, ever pardoned an affront;" and some others perhaps equally illiberal; from which however, with all his vanity, he could draw no very promising inferences as to the success of his suit. And having but little inclination to add to his own mortifications by exposing himself to a refusal, he had more than once an inclination to make Conway's business his errand; and take a *noble* revenge on the incredulity of Mrs. Carloville.

Lord Caerleon *possessed the rudiments*  
of

of generosity : but with a disposition the most unstable, he had been accustomed to the most uninterrupted enjoyment of his own will. Self-denial was a penance almost unknown to him by name : yet some faint glimmerings of right and justice had told him that Conway ought to have the same opportunities of advancing his suit ; and he felt far from satisfied with himself for having kept his journey a secret. Though he had left London entirely with an intention of serving himself ; though he changed his mind half a dozen times on the road, and entered the Castle with the *firmest* intention of speaking only of Conway, he finally decided to plead for himself ; reconciling the justice of the business by Conway's entire ignorance of his proceedings.

Lost in his reverie, he heard not Harwood enter, who, advancing towards him, protested, “ Whether he owed  
this

this visit to friendship or interest, he was equally glad to see him ; for that a man who would take a journey into Wales in such weather, must be powerfully stimulated either by one or the other, was incontrovertible."

"One of these motives I confess is partly out of the question," said Caerleon smiling. "But you seem to have forgotten the *most* powerful, Harwood."

"I believe I comprehend your meaning, my lord ; but I am still ignorant of any particular concern—"

"Well then, have the patience to hear me for a minute, and you will be *au fait*."

Harwood, with a droll countenance, promised to be very attentive.

"I shall speedily convince you," said Caerleon, observing him, "that my intelligence is of a serious nature. You recollect, I imagine, how much earlier than



than usual my father's family quitted Strathener?"

"Yes; three months, I believe?"

"Lord Treacastle had business that called him to town, and he intended returning to spend the Christmas at Strathener. But my uncle had his particular reasons, which though he has not explained I very clearly understand, for persuading my father it was much better for the whole family to leave Strathener at the same time: he wished to hasten Lady Octavia's marriage with Conway, who has lately been appointed to the command of a frigate. He has absolutely refused to marry my sister, which is a denouement I have long foreseen, and of which I have warned Octavia. But she has that foible vanity as well as myself."

"Upon my soul! I never thought it would be a match!" said Harwood.

"Conway

“Conway was much too inattentive and too indifferent for a lover.”

“Well, but every thing I have been saying is foreign to the information I still have to communicate; only that I thought it just to tell you exactly my cousin’s present situation in our family.”

“I own my curiosity is highly raised, and that I am as much as ever at a loss to guess my part—”

“In short, then—Carloville is dead!”

“And you are come purposely to tell me of it!” cried Harwood, jumping up, and shaking Lord Caerleon violently by the hand. “I protest it is the most friendly, the most affectionate, the kindest, the most disinterested thing! You knew how it would rejoice me! If ever I have it in my power to bring you pleasant news, I will acquit myself of this debt, though I traverse all Europe!”

Here Lord Caerleon would have spoken;

spoken ; but Harwood precipitately left the room, declaring he would not detain the information from his wife one single moment for the universe.

In the mean time Caerleon relapsed into uncertainty and irresolution on the subject in question. Sometimes the faint but still pleasing remembrance of Rosamond Beralstone promoted Conway's cause : but at the same moment the form of Ethelreda would glide before his mind's eye, and effectually dissipate every other idea.

Of this extraordinary discovery, the most extraordinary circumstances still remained untold. Indeed Caerleon, when he began to reflect on the part he had performed in this catastrophe, very naturally concluded that decency alone, even if no other motive intervened, would effectually prevent him from succeeding with Ethelreda as a lover. He therefore, after some moments of reflection,



tion, and after having bestowed some few maledictions on his own unfortunate destiny for having made him the instrument of action in an event which nevertheless he could not regret, resolved to tell every circumstance of the affair in question to Harwood; and prevail on him to conceal the principal part he had taken in it from the knowledge of Ethelreda:

When therefore Harwood returned to desire his company in Mrs. Harwood's dressing-room, Lord Caerleon begged he would first hear a particular detail of the manner of Carlovill's death; as it would be extremely distressing to him to be asked any questions on the subject before Mrs. Carlovill.

Harwood with his usual wildness declared the manner was of very little importance; promising however to hear the whole story attentively.

Caerleon then briefly and circumstantially

tially related the whole from beginning to end; not even omitting that part of it which concerned Miss Beralstone, which undoubtedly was not necessary towards the understanding of the before-related detail; and concluded rather abruptly, by declaring he was distractedly in love with Mrs. Carloville.

Harwood received this latter piece of information with a very unceremonious laugh, in which Caerleon could not forbear joining; protesting in the same breath, he would shoot himself if he did not succeed in his intended application.

Mr. Harwood now seriously asked, if he was not joking?

“Joking! Mr. Harwood?” said Lord Caerleon *as* seriously. “Is there any thing in my manner that can tempt you to think so?”

“Oh, perfectly the contrary!” said Harwood, repressing another laugh.

“I see,” said Caerleon, “you are disposed

disposed to turn my proposals into ridicule; but I confess I am at a loss," continued he proudly, "to guess, Mr. Harwood, at your objections."

"You mistake me, my lord," said Harwood, somewhat piqued at his manner. "I am only interested in the *happiness* of my sister; of course I have none in the world, if Mrs. Carloville can overcome certain objections, at least what the world in general esteems such, though fashion may term them *prejudices*."

"I suppose you will not refuse to conceal *some* particulars in this story I have been relating?"

"If I were positively assured the story would never be known to any man beside yourself, my lord, I should think myself unpardonably guilty in concealing it from the woman whom it so nearly concerns, as in the present instance."

"I thought you allowed me some claims on your gratitude, Mr. Harwood,"



wood," said Lord Caerleon, rising and walking towards the door; his tone and manner both expressing haughtiness and resentment.

"Let me entreat you to hear reason, Lord Caerleon!" said Harwood, stepping before him good-humouredly. "Take that chair, and let me convince you that I am perfectly right."

"Give me leave to ring for my servants, sir."

"Your hastiness of temper has made you both unjust and ungenerous, my lord," said Harwood in a severe tone, as he rang the bell.

"Your observation is extremely ill-timed, Sir. As I am impatient to be gone, and not to detain you further, may I beg the favour of some paper and a pen?"

Both were on the table, and Lord Caerleon wrote a short note to Ethelreda, entreating to be allowed one half hour's conversation with her the next day.

day. This he gave to a servant, and, stiffly bowing to Mr. Harwood, once more took the road to Strathener Castle, where he intended to sleep, leaving Mr. Harwood highly incensed at his injustice and tenacity.

Lord Caerleon, entirely unused as he was to opposition, could not help feeling the force of Harwood's arguments, though he least expected them from him. If these then were Mr. Harwood's sentiments, Caerleon saw but little chance of Mrs. Carloville's differing in opinion. Mortified and angry with himself and her, provoked and dissatisfied with Harwood, but inwardly convinced of his own injustice and Harwood's sense of propriety, Lord Caerleon reached Strathener, where he passed a sleepless night. Wavering and irresolute, he arose much earlier than usual, determined to do a thousand things, but fixed on nothing : one moment waiting impatiently for an answer

answer from Ethelreda, and the next resolved to leave Strathener immediately. Not till past eleven did this note arrive. Lord Caerleon took it eagerly from the hands of the servant, expecting, in the first transports of his vanity, that half a line would amply repay him for the two hours of anxiety he had passed since his breakfast.

To a transient observer Lord Caerleon would really have appeared to receive all the satisfaction he expected from its contents, for he smiled twice; but the custom he had given himself of *swearing* at every thing, had left him but one mode of expressing contempt, anger, or approbation, without the aid of words. It is certain neither of these smiles implied approbation; for he had no sooner read the note than he tore it in half, and threw both parts into the fire. Then ringing the bell violently, "Order my chaise immediately," said he to the servant.

VOL. I.

I

"Prude!"



"Prude!" said Caerleon between his teeth, as he fixed his eyes on an old portrait over the chimney. "Strange!" said he, as he considered the picture, "that I should never have discovered the likeness before! A muslin gown instead of flowered velvet, and it might pass for the portrait of Rosamond Beralstone!" Another ring to hasten the carriage brought a servant to say it waited. "Present my compliments to your master, and tell Mr. Harwood I beg his pardon," said Caerleon to a servant in Harwood's livery, who stood near the carriage. Then drawing up the glasses, and wrapping himself in his eider-down pèlisse, he thought of nothing for the remainder of the journey but the delights of London.

I CHAP.

## CHAP. XV.

Get thee glass eyes,

And, like a scurvy politician, seem to see

The thing thou dost not.

LEAR.

**H**OW different are the effects produced by the same cause ! That very circumstance which alone Lord Caerleon imagined stood in the way of his happiness, had raised Conway from misery and despondence to hope, and almost to joy. The report of Carlovill's death, which was now almost universally known, had given him fresh spirits to withstand not only his father's entreaties, but even his commands, should Mr. Conway think proper to use them. But he was much too cautious and too politic to adopt so false a method. He knew that to com-

I 2

mand,

mand, was to provoke his son to disobedience; and though, to use his own phrase, the balance of power was in his hands, he was too well acquainted with the republican spirit of his son, not to know that harshness would drive him to rebellion.

Notwithstanding these prudent resolutions, Mr. Conway dreaded being thrown off his guard by his son's steadiness and perseverance. He had more than once observed Conway's inclinations and his own, instead of coinciding as he intended they should, differed widely; but he comforted himself with the certainty of Ethelreda's marriage, and placed all his hopes upon that certainty. But the death of Carloville, which he would fain have doubted, filled him with perplexity and apprehensions; and though this unexpected accident did not alter his plans, it threw so many obstacles in the way of their completion, that a less practised politician



litician would at once have abandoned them as injudicious and impracticable.

It was after a debate on the subject, the second Mr. Conway had hazarded, that Caerleon entered his uncle's library, where he expected to find Conway alone. He stood with his back turned towards the door, at one of the windows; a newspaper in his hand; Mr. Conway sat frowning, at a table covered with papers and pens. Neither of them saw Caerleon till he was at his cousin's elbow.

"Where have you been?" said Conway, putting the newspaper into his pocket.

"*A la bonne heure,*" said Caerleon in a low tone, at the same time addressing his uncle, who had smoothed his frown into placidity and smiles; and who, not wishing to return to the subject he had been discussing with his son, in the presence of Lord Caerleon, rather *mal-à-propos* asked the same question.

"I have been in Flanders," replied Caerleon. "But that you know already."

"In Flanders!" cried Henry Conway with astonishment: "then you ought to know something of this affair," pointing out the paragraph in the newspaper, totally regardless of his father's presence. It is doubtful whether the question was most perplexing to Lord Caerleon, or to his uncle. The former half determined to deny any previous knowledge of it, in order to disguise the motive of his recent journey; whilst the latter was in imminent danger of hearing all his son's doubts cleared up, and every impediment removed that had hitherto lain in the way of a connection with Mrs. Carloville.

Mr. Conway took two or three turns across the room, whilst Lord Caerleon, under pretence of reading what Conway had pointed out to him, deferred giving any answer. At length, "You had better

better write to Lord Beralstone," said he, "And why to Lord Beralstone, sir?" asked Mr. Conway impatiently. "Did you not return last night? And if you are ignorant of the misfortune that has happened to Mr. Carloville, do you imagine that he is better informed than you are? The date plainly demonstrates that either it happened *before* you left the continent, or not at all!"

"And what then, Sir?" said Caerleon, with a degree of rudeness he would have blushed at upon recollection. "Am I obliged to know every thing that passes in Brussels whilst I am at Ostend?"

"I believe I have some judgment; some penetration, I would say," said Mr. Conway, fixing his eyes on Lord Caerleon; "and yet I am at a loss to divine why your lordship should forfeit civility, good manners I mean, without reason, without provocation."

"I did not intend it, sir," said Caer-

leon:



leon: "but you will pardon me; I think I had some provocation: I hate to be questioned. I am going, Conway," said he, after bowing slightly to his uncle. He was at the door, when Conway called to him to come back: "I have something to say to my father, and I wish *you* to hear it, Caerleon!" cried he.

"We trespass on his lordship's time, Henry," said Mr. Conway with affected composure; though he dreaded extremely to hear what his son intended saying.

Lord Caerleon returned however; whilst Conway, at a loss for words to express what nevertheless he had determined to say, was some moments silent. At length, "You interrupted, or rather you prevented the recommencement of a conversation, in which, Lord Caerleon, you have some concern as well as myself; at least it is most probable you will take some interest in an affair which has to do with the peace of your whole family."

"I see,

"I see, sir," said Mr. Conway; "you are determined to try how much provocation my temper will bear; but," added he sternly, "I advise you not to try it to the utmost."

"And I, sir," said Conway, with a calmness and firmness of manner that surprised even his father, "accustomed as I have ever been to contradiction, I am yet too unmanageable to be controlled in the most important moment of my life. I will be my own master in this one instance; for, not on any consideration would I have it to say, that to you I owed the misery of my future situation. I will confess to you, neither my duty nor my affection would prevent me from reproaching you with it incessantly."

"I begin to comprehend now," cried Caerleon, with an air of fatigue, to his uncle, "that all this relates to Lady Octavia."

"Pshaw!" cried Mr. Conway, in a tone that implied anger and vexation.

"And I wish you to tell my Lord Treastle," continued Conway, without noticing either, "that no engagement has been made between Lady Octavia and me, and only conditionally, as I apprehend, between himself and my father."

"That's false!" cried Mr. Conway, entirely thrown off his guard by the construction his son had put upon his proceedings. "You must know, sir, that my honour and my word are too far engaged to Lord Treastle for me to think of receding; and though the treaty of alliance was set on foot," considerably raising his tone, "without your having been previously consulted, as I never doubted of your fulfilling the compact, so I made no clause in the agreement, whereby you may refuse to keep your faith. And shall I quietly suffer solemn  
articles



articles to be infringed upon, to be broken, I would say, and permit my name to be held up in Europe as an example of the inefficacy of treaties?" Caerleon actually laughed during this pompous harangue, but he took care it should be *à la dérobée*.

"You cannot reproach me with duplicity," said Conway; "neither can Lady Octavia. I have taken this opportunity of disclosing my determinations to Lord Caerleon, to yourself, sir, for the second time, and to my uncle, either through you or my cousin."

Mr. Conway, too much provoked by this last reference to himself, for some moments was utterly incapable of answering; his countenance plainly evinced the excess of passion that agitated him. At length, in a tone of thunder, he exclaimed, "'Tis very well, sir: I know your determination; I shall take some

opportunity of letting you know mine when that gentleman is not present; and I advise you to recollect, when my determinations are made, they are not so easily broken as yours perhaps.

Conway changed countenance whilst his father was speaking, more alarmed at his manner and appearance, than at any punishment implied to himself. "Nay, do not put yourself in a passion, Harry," said his father, observing him, in a mild tone, as if determined to transfer all the rage into which he had been betrayed, from himself to his son.

"It appears to me," said Caerleon, with a sneer, "that we have all changed characters. Conway has transferred his turbulence to you," addressing his uncle, "in exchange for prudence and politeness: I myself have been deficient enough in the latter article; but still it must be acknowledged you are more consummately

mately versed in the affairs of Europe, and he is deeper in the secrets of the house of Conway."

"Pray don't provoke my father," cried Conway, observing the effect of this sally.

"It is not in the power of either the one or the other," said Mr. Conway, as he walked towards the door, whither he was followed by his son who repeatedly attempted to speak to him, but was prevented by the determined manner in which he motioned him with his hand to desist; for Mr. Conway dared not trust his voice, lest he should bring upon himself the insupportable sneers of his most ungracious nephew.

Lord Caerleon seldom behaved with incivility to any one; but to his uncle he thought himself authorised, or at least excused, in his rudeness, because Mr. Conway sometimes convicted him of telling lies of Italy, and sometimes exposed

his



his political errors to Lord Treastle, either of which Caerleon could have forgiven; but Mr. Conway's watchful avarice could ill endure to see the large sums squandered away in trifles which Lord Caerleon openly expended. He therefore prevailed on Lord Treastle to retrench his nephew's income, and himself admonished him to be more frugal. His efforts, though ineffectual, were not easily forgiven by Caerleon, notwithstanding the latter could at any time procure what sums he chose from his father, after half an hour's conversation with him on his favourite topic—the state of the nation.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XVI.

How easy is it for the proper false.

In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!

Alas! our frailty is the cause, not we;

For such as we are made, e'en such we be.

## TWELFTH NIGHT.

**T**HE Beralstons were now returned from the Continent, and with them Lord Caerleon almost entirely spent his time. Miss Beralston had regained her influence over him; and too much pleased and flattered by the conquest of so very fashionable a man as Lord Caerleon, she overlooked or never perceived his numerous faults; and whilst she exercised all the tyranny and caprice of a beauty on a crowd of admirers, she treated him with a marked and flattering distinction; unconscious that Ethelreda, by a single smile,

smile, could at any time appropriate to herself this lover of so much consequence in her eyes. But, as yet, she had seen no instances of Caerleon's whimsical and inconstant disposition. His reasons for quitting Brussels so suddenly were unknown to her; that is to say, he had so well disguised the real ones, that Miss Beralston had nothing to complain of; and in London, where a thousand admirers offered incense, Lord Caerleon was proud of being the favoured votary.

Poor Conway could gain but little information on the subject of Carloville's death from Lord Beralston, who had heard not much more in Brussels than he had gained from the London papers. The Comte de Clerac-Auxerre, who accompanied him to England, could not throw more light on the subject. On the contrary, his opinion seemed to involve it in more obscurity: he insisted it could be no other than Colonel de Winterfeldt, who



who had been missing since the night mentioned as that when the body of Carloville was discovered; the circumstance of the German uniform operating to confirm him in his opinion, whilst he entirely overlooked the notes as very accidental and vague evidence.

This mystery Lord Caerleon alone could clear up, as he alone knew that Captain Carloville and Colonel de Winterfeldt were the same. Conway, whose anxiety made him dread the truth of the report, suffered a thousand fears and surprises to prey upon his mind. He grew dull and melancholy, and his mother, who, for one week, was surprised at his cheerfulness and vivacity, dreaded more than ever his returning despondency. As for Mr. Conway, he was neither vexed nor alarmed at it, but construed every symptom of vexation in favour of his own views and designs.

When he left his son and nephew, so  
highly

highly incensed against each, he was almost equally angry with himself, and inwardly determined never to mention the subject again, at least till his own schemes were fixed beyond the power of Conway to overturn them. His countenance he could command better than his temper; he had, however, so far subdued the latter, as to appear in his own family with perfect composure, and so far imposed on Conway, that he severely blamed his own want of temper; and fondly imagining he had conquered his father's prejudices, he more than once determined to consult him, as in developing mysteries he thought more highly of his father's penetration than of any other man's whatever.

Yet through all Mr. Conway's calmness and affected serenity, a scrutinising eye might have perceived his mind was occupied when he appeared most disengaged. An accumulation of apprehensions,

sions, notwithstanding his dissimulation, were often visibly portrayed upon his countenance; amongst which not the least alarming was the extreme delight Lady Octavia appeared to take in the attentions of the young Count de Clerac, who spared no pains to captivate her, drawing, insipid, and sentimental as she was. To his nephew he literally *dared* not to speak, as their conversations usually ended in contentions; and the slightest provocation would have reminded him of Conway's message to Lord Treacastle, who, he knew, would at once put an end to his hopes of a matrimonial connection; when he perceived his son's reluctance to it. To Conway he remained silent for the same reasons. He knew Caerleon would never remember to relate a syllable of what had passed to his father, unless repeatedly reminded of it; and that Conway would rely upon Caerleon, he as positively concluded, or at least

was



was willing to hope. There remained then no course for Mr. Conway, but to warn his brother of the Count's attentions and insinuating manners, and to reiterate in his ear that he was a *foreigner*.

If Conway was imposed on by the assumed indifference of his father, he was not more at ease with him: he was still suspicious of something he knew not what; nor did he proceed without great caution in his enquiries concerning Careville.

He saw but little of Beralston, and still less of Caerleon. Indeed he had so often tormented both with perpetually questioning them on the same subject, that Caerleon was frequently on the point of telling the whole secret, in order to get rid of his importunities; but a lurking preference still prevented him from giving his rival so manifest an advantage; and it was not till he had made proposals in form to Rosamond Beralston, that he

he could come to the resolution of advising Conway to write to or see Mr. Harwood. The advice itself was nearly as perplexing as the uncertainty. Conway was too much in love not to dread offending Ethelreda or her family. He could find no plausible pretext for writing to Harwood; it was still more difficult to escape his father's vigilance. Thus passed week after week in forming fruitless schemes, which were never attempted to be put in execution.

It is doubtful whether Ethelreda was more at ease in her new character than she had been in her former one. It is true she no more apprehended the return of Carlville. Conway too had refused to marry his cousin, as she had learned from Mr. Harwood: but Conway might have forgotten her; he might have released himself from old engagements only to form new ones, in which she had no share; he might never have recollected

lected that Carloville had left a widow. Yet in spite of these tormenting reflections, and slowly as time seemed to linger, January was gone, February and March passed away. It was April; and in May, if the sitting of Parliament did not interfere, the Strathener family always returned. But Ethelreda's thoughts were not entirely taken up with her own concerns. Mrs. Harwood recovered, but slowly; her health, naturally delicate, required care and attention; her spirits too seemed to give way. Ethelreda, who sometimes reproached herself with adding to her sister's anxieties, made so many efforts to appear cheerful, that in some measure she succeeded so as to regain her former temper, at least in appearance. She herself was often surprised at it: yet whenever this idea occurred to her, involuntarily she looked at her mourning.

Mrs. Harwood's walks were chiefly confined



confined to the Castle gardens; her sister usually accompanied her, Mr. Harwood always. Ethelreda then had but few opportunities of visiting her favourite watch-tower; for when her sister's short walk was ended, she generally returned with her to the Castle for the remainder of the day.

Ethelreda sometimes rose early, and employed herself before breakfast with music; but one fine morning, tempted by the beautiful verdure of the park, which she saw from her window, she put on her hat, and strolled towards the watch-tower. None but the servants of the Castle were stirring; she therefore resolved to indulge herself with solitude till the bell warned her to return. It was not with her usual intention of looking towards Strathener, that Ethelreda climbed the highest part of the park; she even left the tower on her left hand, and never lifted her eyes  
from

from the ground till she reached the skirts of the wood that crowned the eminence. Here, more from custom than intentionally, she stopped and looked towards Strathener. The sun shone brightly upon the walls of the Castle. Ethelreda looked steadfastly: she thought her eyes deceived her; she looked again, and was convinced she beheld the flag waving over the eastern turret—the signal that Lord Treacastle and his family were arrived.

“When did they come?” said Ethelreda aloud: “What day is this?” taking out her pocket-book. It was the first of May. “I must then have passed the may-pole without observing it,” continued she, “as I came through the Castle gates! My poor pensioners will expect me in the village;” still fixing her eyes on the flag; when a rustling among the leaves of the underwood made her turn round. But she saw no thing

thing, and, concluding it must have been the browsing of the deer, she presently resumed her former attitude. Her hand drawn across her eyes prevented her from seeing Lord Caerleon, who passed at that moment; whilst the same circumstance prevented him from knowing Mrs. Carloville. He walked on some paces, when the sound of more feet made her think of returning; and Caerleon, who still kept his eyes fixed upon her, returned precipitately. "Mrs. Carloville! I am certain," cried he. "You are soon returned, my lord," said Ethelreda, perceiving it was Caerleon, and thinking at the same moment of the errand that brought him last to St. Siffrid's.

"I have thought it an age," replied he, sighing, and attempting to take her hand.

"Nay!" said she without noticing his manner, "time passes with me



slowly enough, yet I am certain it is but little more than three months since you were last at St. Siffred's." At that very instant, and almost whilst she was speaking, Ethelreda perceived Conway walking at her side; he had just overtaken them as they descended the hill. He hesitated, trembled, looked angry, and doubtful whether he should join them or pass on. Ethelreda too was alarmed: she started when she saw him, and was so much confused she could scarcely ask for Mrs. Conway. "My mother is tolerably well, madam," said Conway. He then asked after her own health and that of Mrs. Harwood, and then was silent; apparently debating with himself whether he should take leave, or accompany them to the Castle. Lord Caerleon too was silent. As for Ethelreda, she never doubted but Conway had overheard them; and too much ashamed to speak, and dreading the construction

Conway

Conway might throw on her meeting with Caerleon so immediately on his arrival, she quickened her pace in hopes they would perceive she meant to leave them both: but Caerleon seemed to have very different intentions; he still kept close to her elbow: and Conway, who was some paces behind, would soon have lost sight of them at the pace they walked, had not Ethelreda suddenly slipped. Conway sprung forward in an instant, and prevented her from falling; he silently offered his arm. At the same moment Lord Caerleon, without appearing to see that Conway had offered his, said, "Mrs. Carloville, do take my arm; you walk so extremely fast, I am not surprised you were in danger of falling."

"I always walk fast, and usually *alone*," said Ethelreda, vexed at the familiarity of his manner. Conway darted an angry look at his cousin, and, per-

ceiving she was inclined to accept his aid, drew her arm under his and walked on without speaking. The embarrassment of Ethelreda's manner did not escape Conway's eye. He was puzzled at her holding by him, since it effectually prevented him from taking his departure as he intended; and whilst he made reflections not much to the credit of his cousin's constancy, expecting every moment that Caerleon would leave them, they reached the Castle gates, where a crowd of villagers waited the arrival of their beloved benefactress. But Ethelreda, who was without ostentation in her charities, gently waving her hand to her pensioners, passed through with her escort to the breakfast-room.

Mrs. Harwood had not yet made her appearance, and both gentlemen seemed bent on waiting till the other had taken his leave; when Mr. Harwood entered the



the room, and entreated both to stay. Lord Caerleon excused himself: but, to his utter astonishment, Conway, instead of following his example, accepted Mr. Harwood's invitation, and took his place accordingly next to Mrs. Carloville, waiting Mrs. Harwood's entrance.

The breakfast was not a very sprightly one; Ethelreda was embarrassed, Conway was absent and thoughtful. Mrs. Harwood complained of a pain in her side, and soon after left the room with her sister; and Conway proposed a walk to Harwood, in hopes of finding some opportunity of speaking of Mrs. Carloville; or, rather, he was in hopes Harwood himself would begin the subject.

But he was disappointed. At length, after a long silence, as they turned into the same wood from whence he and his cousin had both issued in the morning,

and which joined the domains of Strathener and St. Siffred's, "You are not still in uncertainty as to Mr. Carloville's death?" said Conway. "I perceive Mrs. Carloville is in mourning."

"We have never doubted of the fact one moment," said Harwood. "You in all probability have had the same information from Lord Caerleon: is it possible you can admit a doubt?"

"All the intelligence I could procure, I must confess, amounts to so little, that, notwithstanding the inclination I have to believe it true, I not only doubt, but am nearly convinced, the whole of the report is a false one," said Conway despondingly.

"Let me understand you!" cried Harwood, with impatience and with fear in his aspect. "From whom did you hear the story?"

"From Caerleon and the Count de Clerac."

"Yet

"Yet you are unconvinced of the truth?"

"Let me understand you," said Conway earnestly, "and do not think me impertinent, but highly interested in the questions I am about to ask—Yet, knowing as I do his positive engagement, it is almost a needless question—Does Lord Caerleon pay any particular attentions to Mrs. Carloville? and does she approve of them?"

"Excuse me, Captain Conway," said Harwood gravely, "but I think the latter a very unnecessary question, and injurious to the delicacy of Mrs. Carloville. You cannot imagine she would approve of the man who has been instrumental in the death of her husband? There is something shocking in the idea, though Carloville deserved nothing better of her."

"Stop one moment!" cried Conway.

"Did you say Caerleon was instru-



mental in the death of Carloville? Then he undoubtedly wished to conceal the circumstances of his death from me, as, notwithstanding a thousand interrogatories, I could not prevail on him to grant me more information than the newspapers afforded.—He certainly suspected my intentions,” continued Conway, “and yet it is impossible our present views can ever interfere.”

“And pray,” cried Harwood laughing, “what may *be* your intentions, your present views, Captain Conway? If I can be of any service to you,” continued he gaily, “command me.”

“Dear Harwood!” cried Conway, with hope and pleasure in his countenance, “give me your friendship—your interest would be useless; since I am persuaded Mrs. Carloville will be guided by her heart alone.”

“Mrs. Carloville!” cried Harwood, with counterfeit astonishment. “Oh, if you

you have any thing to say to Mrs. Carloville, she is a lady with whom I never interfere. Besides, I suppose it will be heresy in future to believe her capable of error!—Is not that the tone, Conway?"

"This *persifflage* comes with a bad grace from a married man, Harwood! But don't spare your wit, I am in admirable temper for bearing it."

"Better than your cousin, perhaps?"

"I mean to try him at dinner."

Here they parted; Conway was under the necessity of joining the Strathener family, where his gaiety and sprightliness vexed his father, delighted his uncle, astonished every body, and nearly stole from Lord Caerleon the heart of his intended bride; whilst the Count de Clerac, unable to account for the phenomenon, exclaimed incessantly, "Parbleu! c'est une metamorphose!"

## C H A P. XVII.

Mark those disgraceful piles of wood and stone,  
 Those parks and gardens, where, his haunts betrim'd,  
 And nature by presumptuous art oppress'd,  
 The woodland Genius mourns!

## LIBERTY.

**N**OT a day pass'd in which Conway  
 did not avail himself of his intimacy  
 with Harwood to visit at the Castle.  
 In all these visits he saw Ethelreda, and  
 saw her still more engaging and lovely  
 than ever.

Miss Beralston, happy in the oppor-  
 tunity of renewing the acquaintance of  
 her childhood with Sibilla and Ethel-  
 reda, was continually promoting parties  
 either at St. Siffrid's, or at Strathener  
 Castle, whilst she was yet unconscious  
 that



that Lord Caerleon was only devoted to her in the absence of Ethelreda.

Sir Francis L'Esterling and Lady Mariamne, who had lately taken possession of their house at Kilgaren, gave variety to the circle. And though Sir Francis's peculiarities were sometimes tiresome, they as often were diverting. He had scarcely been three days at Kilgaren, before he was surrounded by artificers of all kinds; from Rome he had got an architect, and maker of fountains; and to Cornwall he had sent for miners, as he was determined to undermine his premises, in order to imitate the grotto of Posilipo.

He had already cut a fine old grove of evergreens into what he called a teatro di verdura; that is to say, he had cropped them into colonnades and apartments, in imitation of some of the villas about Rome. It is true Lady Mariamne was some interruption to his plans;

for she found fault with every thing, abused the house, and declared if he persisted in making the grotto of Pofilipo, she would return to London, and leave him to pursue his improvements alone. But when Sir Francis was determined, her ladyship's threats were ineffectual; he therefore silently set his miners to work, determined to convert the side of the hill into a grotto, in spite of her apprehensions.

If Ethelreda was at ease with regard to Conway, her own happiness did not make her selfish, or regardless of the sufferings of others. She perceived with extreme sorrow, that Lord Caerleon's conduct with respect to her was highly reprehensible, since his attentions and assiduities were equally or indeed more directed to her than to Miss Beralston; who at length discovered his inconstancy, and, in the bitterness of her vexation, tacitly blamed Mrs. Carloville—

though she saw her perfectly uninterested in Lord Caerleon or his proceedings, any further than as they related to Miss Beralston herself.

Ethelreda, from her manner, perceived the injustice she did her; but, free from resentment, she pitied and lamented the cause, and heartily forgave her undeserved coldness, because she saw it was almost impossible for her to restrain her discontent and anger from Lord Caerleon himself, and that her behaviour towards him was a continual struggle between mortified pride and unbounded partiality.

If she was vexed and disgusted at Caerleon's unprincipled inconstancy, she was exasperated at the Count de Clerac, who was become ten times more troublesome than ever Lord Caerleon had been. She was incensed against him, because she perceived all his persecuting flattery was intended to raise the jealousy



lousy of Lady Octavia, and strengthen the preference he was certain she had for him; a mode of proceeding which she knew would effectually procure her the hatred and ill will of the above-mentioned lady, which she dreaded extremely, circumstanced as she was at present with her family. For though as yet nothing like proposals had been made by Henry Conway to Mrs. Carlville; yet every time she saw his father, she was more and more convinced he had other views for his son's establishment than Conway himself had formed; and proud of her descent, and conscious of her superiority to Lady Octavia in every other respect, fortune alone excepted, Ethelreda was a thousand times on the point of putting an end to Conway's addresses whilst his family continued to disapprove of them. But her attachment and preference were stronger than her resolution, or even than the principles

principles of self-consequence in which she had been educated. The fervency of his passion, joined to his irresistible manners, had procured him so strong an ascendancy over the mind and will of Ethelreda, that he had only to entreat with humility, to destroy every resolution which she incessantly made never to see him again.

Mrs. Conway was indeed her warm friend, and neglected no occasion of seeing her, either at Mr. Harwood's or at Lord Treastle's.

At Strathener, where Lord Caerleon ruled absolutely, and issued all invitations, these interviews were frequent; but Mrs. Conway now seldom visited at St. Siffrid's, because Mr. Conway had hinted to her he never would consent to his son's forming such a connection.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*Agli amanti infelici*

*Son secoli i momenti ; e sono istanti*

*I lunghi giorni ai fortunati amanti.*

METASTASIO.

**D**ECEIVED for a moment, Ethelreda believed the adverse tide of her fate had turned ; but she was still many degrees from happiness, or even ease. Her sister's health did not mend, and Mr. Harwood's anxiety threw a gloom over his lively temper, whilst Mrs. Carloville dreaded that every symptom was consumptive. A physician had been sent for from London, who immediately recommended change of air. Mr. Harwood eagerly prepared to follow his advice, with the most sanguine hopes of success ; he therefore proposed a journey



ney into Westmoreland, to Harwood-hall; intending to be as long in performing it as should suit the strength and inclination of Mrs. Harwood. The impossibility of taking their youngest child was at first some objection to the intended journey; but Ethelreda willingly proposed to take charge of them all, determining to remain at the Castle till they should appoint her to meet them in London for the winter.

The plan thus arranged, they were not long in making preparations for the journey. The day was fixed for the first week in August.

Ethelreda saw it approach not without anxiety; she dreaded being left to herself, her own thoughts were unpleasant, and she had resolutely determined to give up all company, Conway himself not excepted, at least till her sister's return; when she hoped, in spite of her pride, which almost forbade her to think

on

on so mortifying a subject, that the impediments that now prevented their union might be removed by Conway's perseverance; and that Mr. Conway's unreasonable objections would give way to the fixed inclinations of his son.

Ethelreda had resolved to accompany Mrs. Harwood the first stage of her journey, which was to be a short one, and return on horseback, as Mr. Harwood had given up his place in the chaise to her. The morning was a very charming one; Mrs. Harwood's spirits were much better than usual, and, satisfied of the care and attention her sister would bestow on the children in her absence, she took leave of them with cheerfulness, and performed the first stage of her journey without much fatigue. After a thousand charges from Mrs. Harwood, and as many promises from Ethelreda, the two sisters parted; with tears each entreated the other to  
suffer

suffer no anxiety to impair her health. Ethelreda, who had partly restrained her sorrow in her sister's presence, had no sooner taken the road to St. Siffrid's than she gave way to her tears. She thought of her alarming illness; of her own situation, which she still considered as dependent; and sometimes of Conway, whom she blamed for his assiduities, situated as she was with his father; and once more made a mental promise to give him up for ever; when, about three miles from Strathener, he overtook her as if by accident—though he had learned at the Castle in the morning what road she had taken, and that she meant to return on horseback.

Ethelreda was certainly pleased at this meeting with Conway, since she could now tell him her fixed and irrevocable determinations. But still the hard sentence died upon her lips, and she suffered every trivial question which he asked



asked to drive her from her purpose—when she came within sight of the Castle. It was now she summoned all her fortitude: “I am at length determined, Captain Conway—” and then she hesitated, as if she expected him to know what she had determined. Conway had heard the sentence too often repeated not to guess to what it tended; but he was resolved not to understand her. “And I too,” said he gaily, “am determined to drink tea with you this evening.”

“That is precisely what I mean to object to,” said Ethelreda. “I have lost my sister,” continued she, “and I am positively resolved to admit none but *formal* visitors.”

“And am I then to be admitted on no other terms?” said Conway in a supplicating tone.

“Besides,” said Ethelreda, “weak and unsteady as I am, I at last perceive

ceive the absolute necessity of *never* admitting you on any other terms; and though it may be a sacrifice (I will not deny that it is), I have at last the strength of mind to make a painful one to my own dignity; and I entreat you will not render it more painful to me by unavailing opposition."

Conway was too much shocked, too much astonished, to make any answer: nor did he perceive they had passed through the gateway, till he saw Ethelreda dismount from her horse without any assistance. He followed her hastily into the Castle, lest she should repeat her prohibition.

He looked anxiously at her, as he placed her chair at the tea-table, and was pleased to discover, by the agitation of her countenance, that he might yet ward off the blow with which he was threatened. He did not give her time to resume the subject herself, but said

mourn-

mournfully, whilst he held her hand, which she did not attempt to withdraw, "You talk of making a sacrifice, Mrs. Carloville, and you think to impose on me by words: but if you wish to dismiss me, tell me so. I can more patiently bear to hear you say you wish never to see me again, than that you should attempt to impose on me by subterfuges."

"If you think me capable of them," said Ethelreda, withdrawing her hand, "you had better concur with me in our separation. I thought once my peace of mind was dear to you, and that, when I had told you how it was to be insured to me, you would not have aggravated my distresses by your reproaches or your suspicions."

"I never reproached you," cried Conway passionately; "but can I bear to hear you make resolutions which are for ever to destroy my happiness, without



out one effort? Oh!" continued he earnestly, "do not sacrifice to pride: it is a phantom created for our destruction. If your mind, elevated and liberal as I have always found it, is not superior to every prejudice, what have I left to hope?"

"Believe me," said Ethelreda calmly, "I am not so averse to my own happiness as to destroy yours. Is not that an acknowledgment that our interests are connected?" said she with a pensive smile. "My notions of propriety I cannot give up entirely, though I will compromise with you: whilst I am anxious about myself, I cannot be unmindful of you!"

This sentence reassured the alarmed spirits of Conway; and though she persisted in her first resolution of seeing none but formal visitors, in which he was obliged to acquiesce, he took his leave not perfectly dissatisfied, and hoping

ing every thing from the softness of Ethelreda's temper.

After Ethelreda had communicated her determinations to Conway, she felt her mind relieved from a weight of anxiety. She was satisfied with herself; and her own approbation, which for some time had been wanting, partly restored her repose, and made her look forward unembarrassed by self-reproach to days of happiness and content.

When Ethelreda forbade Conway's visits, she did not mean to sequester herself from all company; on the contrary, it was her intention to receive all her sister's morning visitors, but to engage in no parties, nor to make any at the Castle. Neither did she intend to refuse admittance to Conway occasionally: relying on the knowledge she had of his deference for her will, she feared not he would attempt coming alone without her permission. She therefore gave no particular

particular orders; and every thing went on at the Castle as usual, with this only difference, Conway's mornings were passed on the beach or in the wood.

Yet Ethelreda was far from reconciled to the arrangement she had made; that solitude once so courted, from disuse was become irksome and fatiguing. It is true the children amused her part of the day, but it was an amusement that could not supply the loss of every other; she had a thousand resources within herself, but to these she could not fly for refuge, because each brought with it some painful recollection. Four days had been passed in indolence and lassitude; it was too unlike Ethelreda to continue: on the fifth morning she rose with a determined resolution to be employed. She therefore placed her easel, her palette, and colours, and searched amongst her unfinished pictures for one that could sufficiently in-



interest her to finish it. She looked them all over, she remembered that Conway had praised them all, and she thought another touch would spoil them. At last she found the drawing of the Colosseum. The marks of Lord Caerleon's pencil were still upon the paper; it had never been touched since he corrected it. But she had heard Conway speak of some views of it he had seen at Turin: she indignantly rubbed out the traces of Caerleon's pencil, and once more ardently resumed her favourite occupation. The state of the picture was advanced beyond the first colouring; and Ethelreda, delighted with the progress she had made, was lost in the contemplation of her own works, till the sound of men's voices in the hall bid her expect company. She thought only of Conway; when the Count de Clerac gaily entered. "Que vous êtes rempli de talens!" cried he, looking at the picture,

ture, which he removed from the easel, at the same time begging her to continue. At the same moment Lord Caerleon and Sir Francis L'Esterling followed: both advanced to the picture: "The *chiar' oscuro* is charming, charming!" cried Sir Francis, applying to Lord Caerleon. Ethelreda at that moment looked at him, and thought he blushed.

"Your colouring is not *quite* purple enough, Mrs. Carloville. What think you, my lord?"

"I am but an indifferent judge," said Caerleon with affected indifference, "and, be it as it will, I always admire the works of *dilettanti* artists."

"Nor I!" cried Sir Francis carelessly, endeavouring to adopt the undecided manner of his model; "I confess I know nothing, I cannot even speak of painting *artifcements*."

"What do you think of the figures,

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Sir

Sir Francis?" said Ethelreda; "have they a Roman air? And the cattle, are they like the cattle of the Campagna?"

"The figures? I think them admirable! The costume is admirable. And the cattle; you have certainly bought them in the Campo Vaccino—or copied them from that beautiful picture in the palazza—in the palazza—Do you recollect those cows, my lord? They were white—like these," shewing the picture.

"Or those in the park," said Caerleon turning to the window, who wished any other subject had occupied the pencil of Mrs. Carloville than that which must unavoidably bring to her memory circumstances much to his disadvantage.

"Comment donc? Vous plaisantez!" said De Clerac addressing Sir Francis: "It is precisely the same when you speak of music: 'Staccato, Crescendo,' à chaque mot, et puis 'I do not understand the terms:'"



terms: 'cependant c'est qu'on appelle partout artificement parler.'

Lord Caerleon and Ethelreda both laughed; and Sir Francis was proceeding to explain that it was by mere accident he applied these words, which were absolutely natural to him, when a signal of impatience from Lord Caerleon and his wishing Mrs. Carloville a good day obliged Sir Francis to postpone his explanation to some other opportunity, leaving De Clerac, who did not choose to take his departure with them, to torment and interrupt Ethelreda, as he generally did by his trifling conversation whenever accident left him alone with her.

Whilst Ethelreda pursued her occupation, De Clerac placed a chair almost behind hers, and talked incessantly on numberless trifling topics, perfectly well satisfied with having all the conversation. Nor did he perceive that Mrs.

Carloville's part of it consisted in now and then a monosyllable; when a note was brought her by a servant, which she opened and read. It contained but two lines from Conway, requesting permission to see her alone in the course of the morning. She found upon enquiry that no one waited for an answer: it was not possible then to send a denial, nor did she intend it; but the request embarrassed her, because she could devise no means of getting rid of the Count. He saw by her air that she was uneasy, and attributed the changes in her countenance to what she had been reading. "Qu'avez vous donc?" said he, in a tone so familiar that an indifferent person would have concluded he had a right to enquire.

"Sir!" said Ethelreda with an expression of surprise that disconcerted him.

"Vous vous troublez," said he. "I feared

feared bad news from Madame Harwood."

"No," said Ethelreda. "But I hope you will excuse me; I expect some one soon on business."

"Certainement. Je partirai." But he kept his seat notwithstanding, and still thought only of amusing himself. "What beautiful hair you have!" twisting a curl round his fingers. "quelle charmante chevelure, et d'une longueur qui ne finit point!"

Before Ethelreda could answer, or even speak, the door opened gently, and Conway advanced some paces into the room. He stopped an instant, looked earnestly at the Count, and at Mrs. Carloville with an expression she could not mistake: he bowed; but not daring to trust himself with words, he bowed again and left them.

Ethelreda in those two or three moments suffered more confusion than



words can describe ; her countenance exhibited every mark of distress, she dropped her palette and her pencils, but could not articulate a word. She saw that Conway observed her agitation, and when he left the room she was convinced it appeared to him his intrusion had caused her embarrassment. She recollected how often she had amused herself by tormenting Conway with the Count's praises, and now she thought he was gone for ever ! What would he think of her ? Alone with De Clerac, when he had been forbidden ! The terrible idea made her almost frantic : she rose and walked the room, regardless of De Clerac, who, pretending not to observe her, was handling and examining every thing upon the table by way of taking from the awkwardness of his own situation, which, notwithstanding his obtrusive manners, he very obviously felt. In the box of colours were two waving locks

locks of Ethelreda's hair: one of them was intended for her sister, the other perhaps for Conway.

"Give me this:" said De Clerac, holding the lock of hair in his hand.

"Not for the universe!" cried Ethelreda vehemently, and taking it from him. "It is already given to my sister," continued she, endeavouring to restrain her emotion.

"But you have another!" said De Clerac, taking it, as if determined not to be refused.

"I *cannot* give it you!" said Ethelreda angrily; "what right have you to ask it?"

"The very best in the world!" cried he gaily, "if it please me, si cela fera mon bonheur;" and he took out his pocket-book, intending to deposit the spoils in it.

"I insist upon your returning it this

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moment,

moment, Monsieur le Comte" — said Ethelreda in a commanding tone.

"Ha ha ! vous plaifantez ! Cela n'est pas vraifemblable."

"I must tell you, Sir, you are not only deficient in the politeness of your nation, but in the manners of a gentleman ; and if you do not immediately do as I command, I must think of some other mode of obliging you to comply !" — De Clerac's countenance changed two or three times from red to pale : he was evidently very angry, very much mortified, and still more disappointed. His vanity was unbounded, and nothing was farther from his thoughts than such a refusal ; as he had already settled in what way he should discover or rather exhibit his trophy to Octavia. He therefore silently placed the intended prize upon the table, and with five or six bows and a half smile took his leave, saying



saying to himself as he departed, "Mais elle est d'une fierté!"

Mrs. Carloville felt a little relieved when she saw him depart; she flattered herself he might overtake Conway before he reached Strathener. But of what avail would that be? Conway's jealous and impetuous temper was very well known to her; he had perhaps received impressions that not all her protestations could efface; or, more probably, he never meant to give her an opportunity of making any. Sinking with fear and vexation, and overcome with apprehensions, sometimes she hoped Conway and the Count would not meet; since every thing was to be dreaded from Conway's passion, and the insolent and exulting vanity of De Clerac. For a moment the purport of Conway's visit rushed upon her mind; she thought he *might* have brought the tidings of his father's compliance, and in the bitterness of her

grief it seemed to her that no circumstance was wanting, that could add to her misery. But the next day proved to Ethelreda, that comparatively the sufferings of the preceding one had been insignificant.

When Conway quitted Ethelreda, his wonder and amazement, joined to the rage and misery he suffered, seemed to threaten him with loss of reason. He stood in the gallery that led from the door, ruminating, or rather endeavouring to recollect what had passed in the few short moments he saw Mrs. Carloville. He expected to hear her call him back; he thought she would have attempted her own justification: but after standing immovable five minutes, which appeared to him as many hours, he slowly walked out of the precincts of St. Siffred's, making something like a vow never to enter them again. He went on without recollection and almost without sense;

sense; and, unconscious of the route he had taken, he found himself at the entrance of St. Siffred's wood before he knew he had taken ten steps from the Castle. He turned round to look at it as if for the last time, and, stretching out his hands towards it with disgust, seemed to take leave of it for ever.

Ethelreda, who stood at the window that looked towards the park, knew him to be Conway as he ascended the slope; she witnessed all his actions, though she heard not his complaints or his reproaches. She thought only of making him return, and opened the window, before she recollected it was impossible he should hear her voice at such a distance. "I will send Llewellyn to him!" cried she; "I can trust Llewellyn."—Llewellyn was sent for. "Go to Mr. Conway, and tell him I wish to speak to him instantly!" said Ethelreda, with an impatience that almost stopped her utterance.

"At



"At Strathener, madam?"—"No, no, no, in the park! There!" cried she, showing him the window.

Poor Llewellyn was not the swiftest of messengers; he had been many years in the service of Sir Roger and in that of his daughters; he began to grow old. He however went with all his speed: but Conway, who saw him long before he could arrive to deliver his message, darted into the wood and effectually evaded the vigilance of his pursuer.

Llewellyn however continued to advance towards the premises of Strathener, in hopes of overtaking the fugitive; when suddenly crossing a path in the wood he was stopped by the elder Mr. Conway. Llewellyn was without a hat, and his countenance joined to that circumstance raised the curiosity of Mr. Conway. "Where are you going?" said he.

Llewellyn made no answer. Not that  
he

he had been forbidden, but he thought Mr. Conway, whom he disliked, had no right to ask.

Mr. Conway repeated his question, and Llewellyn answered in Welch, "He had lost something." It was a language Mr. Conway affected not to understand; he therefore only desired to know whether Mrs. Carlovile was at home, and took the path leading through the wood to St. Siffred's Castle.

Ethelreda's eyes were still fixed upon the wood, and so blinded by tears, that when Mr. Conway appeared she took him for his son, and impatiently waited his arrival; and no sooner did his step in the hall give her notice he was coming, than, throwing open the door, she exclaimed, "You do not refuse to hear my justification then?—I scarcely hoped so much indulgence!"

"Mrs. Carlovile deserves every indulgence."

dulgence:" said Mr. Conway calmly ;  
" at least I hope so."

Ethelreda's precipitate eagerness explained to Mr. Conway her mistake ; he saw at once too, there was a misunderstanding, and that his son had received some unfavourable impression she wished to remove. It appeared to him instantly, that this was the moment to separate them for ever.

Every circumstance seemed to assist his design, and the arrangement he had already made for Conway's departure promised him success even to a certainty. He took no notice of the consternation Ethelreda appeared in when she discovered her mistake, nor did he seem to observe that she was near fainting : but with all his customary politeness even to affectation, he entreated he might not keep her standing, though at the same moment he feared she would fall on the floor.



floor. Yet he was embarrassed in spite of all his hard policy, when he recollected the sufferings he was preparing for his son. As for Ethelreda, he thought not of hers, because she was poor, and inured to disappointment.

Whilst he was making these reflections, Ethelreda, determined not to suffer his pride to triumph in her confusion, and exerting all the energy she possessed, with astonishing calmness entreated him to let her know to what circumstance she owed the honour of his visit. Her manner when she chose it was uncommonly dignified, and she seemed at this moment as if animated by the pride and consequence of all her long line of ancestors.

Mr. Conway augured badly to his own cause when he saw her so composed; he hesitated some moments, debating with himself whether he should or should not speak openly to Mrs. Carville; and had

had not avarice placed the strongest of all bars between his son's will and his own, at that moment he had entreated Mrs. Carloville to become one of his family. It was necessary however to return some answer to her question. "I came, madam—not to wound your consequence or your pride, as I am fearful you will think I do, because the subject itself is forbidding"—He stopped, as if to give her an opportunity of speaking. Ethelreda looked as if she expected him to proceed. "It is therefore necessary then," continued he, "that I should be explicit, and speak with more than common exactness (I mean precision), that you, madam, may know exactly my objections and determinations."

"I am prepared to hear you with attention, sir," said Ethelreda haughtily, and blushing at the indignity she had drawn on herself.

"You now comprehend, madam, that  
what

what I have to say relates to you, and to my son?"

Ethelreda bowed. Mr. Conway resumed.

"My son, then——"

"I wish *only* to hear what relates to *myself*, sir"—said she with still more haughtiness.

"Very well, madam." He was silent some moments to recover his temper, which had manifestly failed him at her interruption; he had intended to make a pompous display of his expectations and views for his son, and her manner explained to him that she had perceived it.

"All I have to say, madam, is simply this; that I have no objection whatever to yourself or your family: it is solely your want of fortune, joined to my other engagements, that renders you an ineligible match for my son. Henry Hugh Conway has an ancient name to support,  
and



and *may* have a title. His fortune, though it will be large, is not alone adequate to his birth and expectations; I have therefore fixed on Lady Octavia Conway as a proper wife for him, in every respect his equal." He paused for an answer. Ethelreda was silent.

"Every preliminary is settled between the principal powers, I mean myself and Lord Treastle; and your influence, I am persuaded, properly directed, will induce my son to guaranty the treaty — I wait upon you, madam, to ask it." This last sentence was delivered so much in the tone of a supplicating ambassador who is directed to soothe rather than to irritate, that Ethelreda, always alive to the ridiculous, determined to answer him as much as possible in the costume he had adopted, and accordingly in the style of a sovereign she said: "I have heard you, sir, with attention; you will find that not  
one

one syllable of your representation has been lost. I thank you personally for your approbation of myself and of my family. What remains to be said will perhaps give you more pleasure than were I to grant your last request. I cannot influence your son, since I have not any influence over him : to attempt it therefore would be to expose my own inability and the weakness of your allies ; it would be giving the name of power to a shadow, were I to exert any ; and I am well aware, that you already know the success of an enterprise depends often more on its apparent probability than any other circumstances, however advantageous !"—Ethelreda's voice never faltered once as she delivered this long sentence, nor did her countenance betray any sign of weakness. She arose at the conclusion of her speech : her features changed a little when she desired her compliments to Mrs. Conway, as she observed

observed him take his hat. He seemed struck with her manner, but attempted not to answer what she had been saying. He bowed politely but not cordially, and withdrew, doubting whether Mrs. Cardoville meant to ridicule him or pay him a compliment by the manner in which she had replied to him.



## C H A P. XIX.

Natis in usum lætitiæ scyphis  
 Pugnare, Thracum est. Tollite barbarum  
 Morem, verecundumque Bacchum  
 Sanguinea prohibete rixis.  
 Vino & lucernis Medus acinaces  
 Immane quantum discrepat ! impium  
 Lenite clamorem, fodales,  
 Et cubito remanete presso.

HORAT. OD. XXVII.

AFTER Conway escaped from Llewellyn's pursuit, he wandered through the wood, avoiding carefully all the paths where either family was accustomed to walk. Nor did he once recollect that at Strathener a large party of gentlemen was expected, some of whom he had invited, and whom it was necessary he should introduce to his uncle. The sun was sinking in the horizon : its setting

ting beams alone recalled to Conway's mind, his engagement. He hastily looked at his watch: it wanted but twenty minutes of seven, and at a quarter before six the family dined. He walked precipitately on to the Castle in defiance of the heat, and entered the dining-room just as the ladies were quitting it.

Not only Conway's absence at dinner, but his dress, required an apology. His hair blown about his face, almost entirely robbed of powder—the ribbon that tied it gone—a morning coat, torn in his wandering through the underwood—and without a hat—His whole appearance, together with the agitation of his countenance, represented strongly a person suddenly escaped from some terrible calamity. He had still recollection enough to beg pardon for his absence; but the deficiency of his dress quite escaped him. He took his place at the table next Sir Francis

Francis L'Esterling, and occasionally spoke with tolerable composure to Lord Beralston, and all the party, except the Count de Clerac-Auxerre, whom he eyed from time to time with looks of passion bordering on madness.

De Clerac himself was for the first time out of spirits; he thought he had only been amusing himself with Mrs. Carloville, and he was surprised to find that her disdain affected him. Still however his vanity prevented him from taking the mortification with humility, and in hopes of venting his anger he indulged himself in several very illiberal hints against women.

Sir Francis L'Esterling, who was that day uncommonly absent, had been filling his glass so repeatedly without waiting for the rest of the company, who made a point of not disturbing his reverie, that he was nearly intoxicated,



though the most temperate man in the world. Conway too, who sat next him, had a few times done the same, from want of observation; which joined to his long abstinence (for he had eaten nothing since the morning), the intense heat, and, more than all, the perturbation of his mind, seemed to have raised his spirits beyond their usual pitch. He talked a vast deal, and listened eagerly to every syllable De Clerac uttered, in hopes of hearing him say something at which he might take umbrage.

De Clerac still continued talking in the same strain, and at last with so little caution or disguise, that Conway and Caerleon both plainly perceived that some particular lady was meant by him.

Lord Caerleon desired him to choose another subject.

"No," said he: "Je parlerai sur ceci; c'est un theme inépuisable!"

"You

"You shall leave the room then, M. de Clerac-Auxerre!" said Conway, half choked with passion.

"Et plus encore," said De Clerac, looking contemptuously at Conway, "I will say, Je dirai qu'il n'y a pas une femme, not one, dont la reputation vaut ceci, not worth this," said he, holding up the stem of some grapes.

"You mean the ladies of your own country, I presume, M. le Comte?" said Caerleon, looking fiercely at him.

"No, no, I mean England, le pays de Galles."

"Say that again, and I will knock you down!" cried Conway in a voice of thunder.

"Viva tutte le vezzose donne, amabili amorose!" sung Sir Francis; and De Clerac repeated "*I mean Wales*"—looking pointedly at Conway.

Conway did not wait for a second defiance; he sprung nimbly across the ta-

ble,

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ble,

ble, and struck De Clerac a blow that made him stagger back in his chair. The latter was not slow in returning it; but, unfortunately mistaking his aim, he bestowed it on Lord Caerleon instead of him from whom he had received the affront.

In a moment all was riot and confusion. "Arms! arms!" echoed from every mouth, the bottles and glasses were engaged in the combat, it was the feast of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ.

Lord Treastle and Mr. Conway had been called out on business some few minutes previous to this fracas, and were not yet returned, or in all probability they would have devised some means for preventing the dispute from coming to so hostile an issue. In the midst of this universal anarchy, not one gentleman offered himself as the second of De Clerac. Sir Francis observed it with sorrow; and though he was averse to engaging in the quarrel,



quarrel, the subject of which had entirely escaped him, yet his predilection for foreigners made him pity the Count's awkward predicament; to relieve him from which he offered to be his second, and was thankfully accepted.

Still there was a material point to be adjusted: either Conway or Caerleon must fight with the Count de Clerac: each insisted upon the priority of right.

It became a scene of confusion almost equal to that described by Ariosto in the camps of Charlemagne and the pagan king. And to add to the tumult, Sir Francis recited in a loud voice the passage in the Orlando, describing the manner in which all the chiefs insisted upon the prior right of combat; some for the sword Durindana, some for the steel Frontino, some for the armour of Hector, and some for the horse Brigliad'oro. In short, to speak in the language of Don Quixote, "here was all

the confusion of King Agramante's camp, *without* the wisdom of King Sobrino."

The order of combat was still unsettled when Lord Trecastle and his brother made their re-appearance. They entered unnoticed, so great was the noise, and so thoroughly were the whole company occupied, the least interested in trying to accommodate the enraged parties.

"Harry Conway! Caerleon! what is the matter?"—cried Lord Trecastle, observing his son and his nephew, each with pistols.

"What are you at, Henry?" cried Mr. Conway.

"*He* has dared—" cried Conway, pointing to the Count, "*he* has *dared* to defame Mrs. Carloville!"

"And what right have you to resent it?" asked Mr. Conway angrily.

"I will answer no questions!" cried Conway,

Conway, in a voice hoarse with passion.  
“Fire! De Clerac.”

“Not *here*, sir! Not in *my* house shall the laws of hospitality be infringed upon”—said Lord Trecastle in a determined tone.

“*I insist* upon meeting him first, Conway!” cried Caerleon. “Did he not strike me?”

“What you too!” cried Lord Trecastle in an agony of passion: “do you *dare* me, Caerleon?”

“*You*, my lord, or any man. Would you have me suffer a blow?”—“Fire, De Clerac, this instant!”

“Hugh! Lord Caerleon! leave my house this moment! Do you think I will suffer a foreigner and a guest to be ill-treated in it by you?”

“*I will* leave your house, never to enter it again,” said Caerleon, resolutely.

“And the reason will redound to the *honour* of your *house*,” ironically—“that



I left it because I insisted on revenging an insult, an injury, a disgrace! I thought, even had I asked you to be my second, you would have complied."

"No, Caerleon, I deny that; it is impossible you can be so ignorant of my principles, as to imagine I would ever fight a duel with a man whilst he is my guest"—said Lord Treastle more calmly. "And," continued he, "since you represent the case as so urgent, fight with the Count if you please, but do not bring so great a disgrace upon my name as to do it within the walls of the Castle."

Whilst Lord Caerleon was arguing the matter with his father, Conway and the Count, accompanied by Lord Beralston and Sir Francis, slipped out unperceived, and in two fires their dispute was decided. Owing to the dusk of the evening, each took so bad an aim as to occasion the other no injury. After the second fire the Count condescended to  
make

make an apology, which Conway was desired to accept; and the gentlemen shook hands, though with some remains of malice in their hearts; at least in Conway's, who, possessing all the gallantry of a sailor, could not patiently bear to hear any woman lightly spoken of undeservedly, much less the woman whom of all others he thought of most highly, though he believed at the same moment she had given him up for ever.

It was now not very difficult to appease Lord Caerleon. De Clerac declared the blow he had given was accidental, and apologized for it; Lord Caerleon accepted the concession, and all parties amicably adjourned to the drawing-room, except Conway and his father. There the ladies impatiently expected them; though very fortunately they knew nothing of this fray till it was over.

Henry Conway's unfortunately timed

M 5

visit

visit to St. Siffred's Castle was meant to inform Ethelreda of the sudden necessity he was under of going immediately to London. He had received letters importing that he must immediately take the command of the frigate to which he had been appointed. He therefore intended to take leave of Ethelreda; and to obtain, if it were possible, some kind of promise from her, not to let any other supersede him in her good opinions, which, in spite of all his fears and apprehensions, he flattered himself he possessed. What he took for perfidy and want of faith in Ethelreda's behaviour, therefore, wounded him with tenfold sharpness; though at the same time he could not endure to hear the Count de Clerac charge her with levity, whose incongruity was an enigma too inexplicable for Conway to unravel till his mind was more composed, and his comprehension more collected.

Mr. Con-



Mr. Conway and his son went to the library in preference to the drawing-room, not to talk over the recent quarrel, but to settle the time and manner of Captain Conway's departure. It was Mr. Conway's and Lord Treastle's influence that had procured a ship for Conway just at this juncture. At all events, Mr. Conway saw it was necessary Mrs. Carloville and his son should be separated: besides, it was highly detrimental to his plans that Conway should witness Lady Octavia's decided preference for the Count de Clerac, who evidently intended to secure the lady and her fortune.

Mr. Conway therefore studiously avoided mentioning Ethelreda to his son, lest he should think of coming to some explanation; for it was evident to him, that one was wanting. He resolved, then, to keep Ethelreda's disavowal of all influence over him, as a strong body

of reserve, to bring forward whenever the urgency of his plans should require it. And it was finally settled that Conway should depart early in the morning, without taking leave of any one.

CHAP. XX.

——— a brother noble;  
 Whose nature is so far from doing harm  
 That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty  
 My practices ride easy. I see the business.  
 Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:  
 All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit.

LEAR.

**I**N the drawing-room the Count and Lord Caerleon took up the attention of the ladies entirely. Lord Caerleon undertook to relate the manner of the quarrel to Miss Beralston; and whilst he gave to the subject what turn he pleased, it is certain he acquitted himself to Miss Beralston's satisfaction entirely.

De Clerac found it more difficult to exculpate himself with Octavia. He  
 had



had behaved very unpardonably; but however, partly by flattery, partly by laughing, and mostly by telling lies, he contrived to leave Octavia tolerably well satisfied with his excuses.

But the servants told the story very differently to the foubrettes; and the foubrettes faithfully told *all* to their mistresses at night, with some few additions of their own. In the servants' hall the story ran, "that Captain Conway was in love with Mrs. Carloville; that *he* was jealous of the Count, and Lord Caerleon of *both*; for," added they, "it was doubtful whether there would not have been a duel between the young lord and his cousin."

These accounts corresponded so badly with the very lame ones given by the two gentlemen, and so many circumstances concurred to prove that the foubrettes and the valets were best informed, that Lady Octavia breathed  
nothing

nothing but jealousy and revenge; meaning to call next day on Ethelreda, accompanied by Miss Beralston; and by some means or other, yet undevised, to retort all her own mortification and disappointment upon the head of her hitherto too potent rival; for to have occasioned a duel, was in the eyes of Lady Octavia a crime so heinous that she could not have pardoned it in any but herself. But, alas! Lady Octavia never had occasioned one! though more mischievously inclined than most ladies.

Ethelreda had already heard the detail from Llewellyn, who had been at Strathener. He was told by the servants of the Castle, who, not forgetting the heroine of the combat would by some means or other hear the whole repeated, extolled the ardour of the combatants, and the beauty of the lady who had excited them to deeds of arms.

Ethelreda was shocked to death when  
Llewellyn

Llewellyn related the whole in the pompous terms of chivalry he had learned out of the old Romances in Sir Roger's library ; and though she was spared the misery of hearing that either was wounded, the idea of becoming the topic of conversation for the whole country, hurt her delicacy, and drew upon Conway almost her mental displeasure ; though she remembered she might never perhaps have an opportunity of reproaching him for it, or of exculpating herself. She was still ignorant of his departure ; for the Strathener servants, too much occupied with the late adventure, had forgotten to mention it. She felt disappointed that Conway had made no second attempt to see her ; but when she thought of her conversation with his father, she no longer doubted but Conway had given way to his father's entreaties, and that she had been sacrificed to his duty. Even her pride deserted her at  
this



this moment; and had not the option been denied her, rather than lose him for ever, she had consented to make any promise he had chosen to have required of her.

Thus harassed by her own thoughts, but without spirits to fly from her solitude, Ethelreda felt thankful but perplexed when the names of Lady Mariamne L'Esterling, Lady Octavia Conway, and Miss Beralston were announced.

"Mrs. Carloville, we come to congratulate you," said Lady Octavia, impatient to begin the subject.

"To congratulate *me*, Lady Octavia! Is it possible?" said Ethelreda with surprise.

"Why, yes," said Lady Mariamne, "on the prowess of your numerous champions, Mrs. Carloville."

"Your beauty will become as celebrated as that of Helen, or Cleopatra, or, what's

what's the name of the other?" said Octavia, applying to her sister.

"The Venus of Medicis, I suppose," said Lady Mariamne with a sneer.

"You distress me exceedingly, ladies," said Ethelreda with a tear in her eye. "You cannot imagine I exult in this most unfortunate duel?"

"Nay," said Lady Octavia, "you cannot call it an *un*fortunate duel, since it has added to your train of lovers—I mean, openly. The Count de Clerac is no despicable acquisition."

"Nor Lord Caerleon"—said Miss Beralston, speaking for the first time.

"You have omitted Captain Conway," said Lady Mariamne.

"Captain Conway? Oh, Captain Conway," cried Octavia laughing most spitefully, "is a very old captive, almost old enough to be discarded. Besides," continued she, "I understand he departed this morning for London."

This

This last piece of intelligence was too much for Ethelreda's spirits in their present state to bear, and she actually burst into tears.

Poor Miss Beralston, notwithstanding her own fancied wrongs, was affected at Ethelreda's distress: she endeavoured to console her, and, looking reproachfully at the two sisters, who only stared, she thought to alter the subject by enquiring whether Mrs. Carloville had heard from her sister.

"But once," said Ethelreda: "and her letter is the only pleasure I have received since her departure." At that moment the door opened, and Lord Caerleon entered unannounced. The two ladies looked disconcerted, for they both feared their brother; and Miss Beralston turned pale.

"What!" cried he, much alarmed, "is Mrs. Carloville ill? Send for some one!" continued he: "I will go myself!"



self! For heaven's sake, what is the matter?" with so much anxiety in his countenance that poor Miss Beralston could scarcely restrain her tears.

"No, no! I am very well;" said Ethelreda with a look that contradicted her assertion, as she glanced her eyes towards the two ladies.

In an instant Lord Caerleon comprehended by the faces of the whole group, that some spiteful sallies of his sisters, whose tempers with regard to Mrs. Carloville he perfectly understood, must have occasioned Ethelreda's distress. He looked furiously at them, and with a pointed sneer, and in the most acrimonious tone, said, "You *may* be very amusing, ladies; but as your company seems to have rather an unpleasant effect on the spirits of Mrs. Carloville, I must deprive her of your company." At the conclusion of this speech Lord Caerleon looked towards Miss Beralston.

Ethelreda,

Ethelreda, alarmed, exerted herself to beg they would prolong their visit, and even hoped they would repeat it; for it was by no means her wish to make any open difference between the families; but Lord Caerleon was determined; the ladies looked mortified; Miss Beralston cried; and thus ended the maliciously intended triumph over Mrs. Carloville.

Mr. Conway had no sooner disposed of his son to his satisfaction, than Strathener became irksome to him, and his own numerous schemes required his presence in London; particularly the grand one to which all his views tended, namely, of recovering the title of Abertonway, which formerly had been borne by the head of the Conway family, but forfeited for rebellion, together with Conway Castle, by some of his turbulent predecessors, in the reign of Henry the Fourth. The title of Tre-castle had been bestowed upon the fa-  
mily

mily of Conway at the Restoration, not so much as a reward for its services, as to secure the fidelity of a house of so much consequence and power. None but the title borne by his ancestors, amongst not the most remote of whom he reckoned the Merediths and the Glendowrwys, could content the soaring ambition of Mr. Conway; and inwardly he despised the want of it in his brother, who could tamely see him taking measures to supersede him as it were in his birthright. But these measures entirely escaped the observation of Lord Trecastle and his son; either of whom possessed enough of the family spirit not to suffer such an usurpation whilst they had the power of preventing it. It was the ruinous state of Conway Castle that made Mr. Conway so anxious to promote a match between his son and Lady Octavia, whose large independent fortune, the legacy of an uncle, would



would be extremely useful to him in repairs. It was the hopes of one day becoming as it were from a younger brother the head of his family, that animated Mr. Conway to be indefatigable in the services in which he was employed by Government; in expectation of receiving, as a reward for his uncommon abilities as a negotiator, the title of Earl of Aberconway, for which he privately solicited. And so great was his caution with regard to his son and Mrs. Conway, that his designs were not even guessed at by them. The former he knew would have blushed at the injustice of obtaining by underhand methods what Lord Treastle looked upon as his absolute property; and in fact the grandeur of Conway's spirit would immediately have prompted him to lay the whole before his uncle. Thus circumstanced, Mr. Conway paid himself many compliments upon the adroit manner

manner in which he had disposed of Captain Conway; and perhaps the idea of making the fortune of his brother's daughter instrumental in the aggrandisement of his own family, to the prejudice of Lord Trecastle's branch of it, was a stroke of fine policy, that afforded him more pleasure in the contemplation than the possession of the much wished for title itself would have done; since he expected it would give his talents additional celebrity: it was, in the language of the French politicians, both to *cultiver* and to *contrecarrer*.

Mr. Conway departed for London, leaving Mrs. Conway at Strathener for the air, which was necessary to her health; who now, no longer subject to the suspicious eye of her husband, indulged herself in sometimes paying a melancholy visit to Ethelreda;—melancholy, because each made her feel more sensibly her son's misfortune in being

obliged to relinquish such a woman; for she saw no prospect of a change in Mr. Conway's sentiments, and she never doubted but Henry would submit to his father. Still she ardently prayed some unforeseen occurrence or event might prevent a union from taking place between him and her niece, to whom she had a confirmed dislike; and indeed there appeared some probability that her prayers would be granted, since the Count de Clerac's assiduities were redoubled, notwithstanding the known general dislike of Lord Treastle to foreigners, under the most favourable circumstances; but as he had the power to withhold some part of Lady Octavia's fortune, though by much the larger was at her own disposal, Mrs. Conway dreaded a thousand impediments between her and her wishes. But, more than all her own troubles, those of

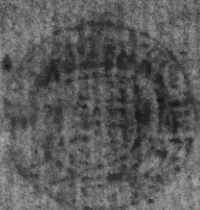


Ethelreda tormented her. She loved her with the affection of a mother—yet she saw her deserted, solitary, dependent. She saw her beautiful, accomplished, elegant, with ten times more than common talents, and ten thousand times more than common attractions, giving up her days to sorrow and discontent. And what was still more alarming, she observed, or fancied she observed, her health declining as well as her spirits.

Her visits then could not fail of being melancholy ones, since they presented to her a young woman, endowed with every grace to adorn a life of splendour, passing her days in grief and silence amidst the towers of a solitary castle, whose gloomy turrets and massy wall, together with the dim light that shone through its windows encumbered with architecture, always brought to the mind of Mrs. Conway the state prison  
of

of a romance—and Ethelreda, the unfortunate heroine, who was doomed to spend her days there, unpitied, and hopeless of redress.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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ST. JEROME

of a romance and Eucharist, the un-  
fortunate heroine, who was bound to  
speak her day's story, and the  
list of records.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

